NICOLAI V. GOGOL

TARAS BULBA

A TALE OF THE COSSACKS

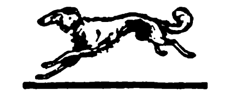


TARAS BULBA

A TALE OF THE COSSACKS

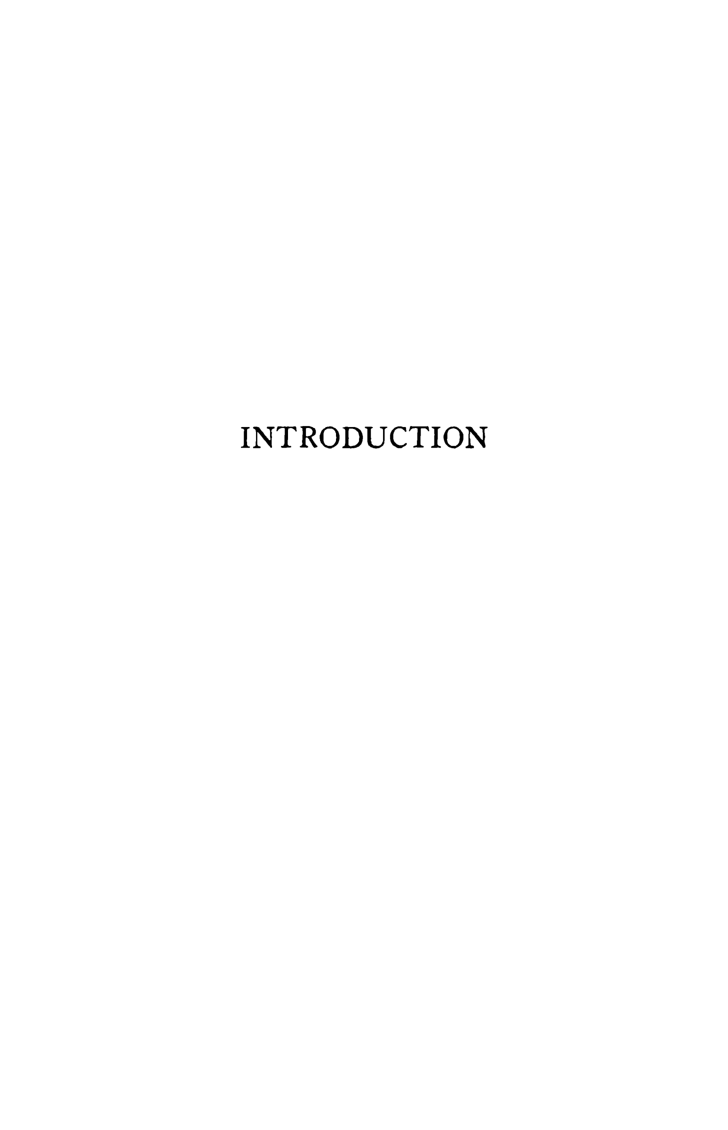
TRANSLATED FROM
THE RUSSIAN OF
NICOLAI V. GOGOL

By ISABEL F. HAPGOOD
WITH AN INTRODUCTION



ALFRED A. KNOPF
NEW YORK MCMXVII

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The famous old Kazák, Taras Bulba, is one of the great character-creations which speak for themselves, and require no extraneous comment or "interpretation." Indeed, his overflowing vitality embraces not only his sons, but all his comrades, with their typical Little Russian nomenclature ending in *ko*, and the reader's interest in Kazakdom in general and the Zaporozhtzi in particular, is kindled to a very unusual degree. He immediately wishes to know: Where was — and is — the Ukraina? Where was Zaporozhe? Where — and what — was its capital, The Syech? Where did the Kazáks get their name, and what does it mean?

Complete answers to these questions can be found only in Russian authorities. Historians and specialists have interested themselves so deeply and so long in these and allied questions, that the data available are confusingly abundant. I shall not bewilder the reader by giving him a choice of numerous theories: I shall autocratically select the

one which appears to me to be most rational, best founded, most satisfactory for all practical purposes, and offer it for his consideration if not his adoption.

The Ukraina, briefly stated, is — the Border Marches. Naturally it has varied, in different epochs, just as our Western Frontier (pretty nearly its exact equivalent) varied at different periods in the briefer history of the United States, and was pushed further and further away from the Eastern centre of civilisation. In the case of Russia, Moscow represented that centre.

The line was never fixed, never definite. At one period it ran not very far south of Moscow, although the region beyond a line beginning two or three hundred miles south of Moscow — Southwest Russia, with Kiev as its centre — contains, roughly stated, its variations and general location, so far as the " Ukraina " of Gogol's delightful Tales, and the exquisite poetry and music of The Ukraina are concerned.

When I was visiting the late Count L. N. Tolstoy at Yasnaya Polyana, the young men of the family often played on their balalaikas (among other Russian folk-songs) a dance-song which irresistibly incited one to laughter, and set one's feet to patting. When I inquired the words to this " Bárynya-Sudárynya " (Lady-Madam) I

was told that they were not only fragmentary but really quite shocking.

No one, it appears, had ever cared much for the words of " Bárynya-Sudárynya," and the four or five couplets generally known of the other reprehensible tune, the famous " Kamarynskaya," had been so badly damaged by careless repetition and reproduction that even the learned had come to look upon both songs as purely scandalous, useless, unworthy of notice. But one day it was discovered that " Bárynya-Sudárynya " is a sequel to the " Kamarynskaya,"— and that the words are scandalous in part only, while the two combined chronicle an interesting epoch of that strenuous life of the Border Marches — the Ukraina — which, for many centuries, was the chronic condition of the Tzardom of Muscovy as it evolved triumphantly to the present Empire of Russia.

The heroes of both songs are strictly historical personages, and their abode was the Southern Frontier — the Ukraina of Moscow — which, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries meant the present Government of Orel (pronounced *Aryól*), and so continued, with the addition of an unflattering adjective, until Little Russia, the Cradle of the Empire, temporarily conquered by Poland, was reunited to Moscow. During this second period a prominent place was occupied by the District of

Kamaritzkaya (also known as Kamarnitzkaya, or Kamarynskaya, from the word, *komár*, a mousquito or gnat. Whether the region derived its appellation from the fact that it was mousquito-ridden, or because of the stinging powers of its inhabitants, I am unable to state). During this epoch, the district in question was teeming with the germs of many important historical events, and offered a favourable field for the development of the foolhardy, dissolute scapegrace of a peasant who acquired the name of the region and became immortalised with it in the most famous of Russian folk-songs, whose air was first arranged for orchestra by Glinka, the father of modern Russian secular Music, and to whom, in great measure, it is indebted for its present world-wide fame.

The Ukraina of that day may be said to have extended to the Caucasus (Kavkaz) on the east, the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov on the south, and into present Poland and Galicia on the west — in fact, it occupied the region which the present-day "Ukrainians" (a political, semi-German-Austrian party into whose quarrels and aspirations I cannot enter) would like to see erected into a separate kingdom, alien to Russia. The Kamarynskaya District became the property of Moscow in 1508, having previously, for a long time, belonged to Lithuania; and for many years it was

the most dangerous spot in the whole vast Border Marches, subject to raids and deeds of violence from both its former and its present owners, as well as from the Tatárs of the Crimea, and the Poles. The inhabitants lived a semi-savage life, and were famed for the roughness of their ways — even in that rough age. They were few in number, and the situation grew so acute after the conquest of Kazán from the Tatárs (1552), that it became an imperative necessity to populate the district, in order to protect Moscow from the Tatárs of the Crimea, who were enraged by the overthrow of their brethren on the Volga.

Moscow decided that strong towns must be founded, at any cost; and, at last, Tzar Ivan the Terrible (*Grózny* is the Russian word which is always, by custom, translated, "terrible"; but, in connection with Ivan IV, it really signified, as always when applied to Tzars, "daring, august, imperious, one who inspires his enemies with terror and holds his people in obedience"), who accomplished such incalculable work for the unification of Russia, set about the task. All the colonists who could be collected, by hook or by crook, were despatched thither, without regard to their moral character, fighting qualities alone being taken into consideration. Young men were chosen, the more reckless and enterprising the better. In fact,

the Ukraina of that age played the part taken by Siberia at a later day, and received all criminals and undesirable persons banished to protect the rights of others, to save the peace, and to settle the Border Marches: the "bad men" were given a chance to rehabilitate themselves in a prison whose roof was the sky, whose walls were the horizon. With modifications, the description of conditions applies, with much accuracy to our own Western frontier, save that residence there was not compulsory. The local authorities were strictly forbidden to tamper with these wild colonists.

Then, when Tzar Boris Godunov, after usurping the throne, instituted serfdom (about 1592) — almost, under prevailing conditions, justifiable as a measure of state — every peasant who rebelled against being bound to the glebe fled to the Kamarynskaya. The Great Famine of 1601–3 sent more recruits. The district was conveniently near home for the immigrants, and fell into the category of "Crown Lands," so that serfdom was not established there. Naturally, also, no one was particularly anxious to own the sort of people who belonged there. In this throng, which comprised all sorts and conditions of men, the criminal element predominated. The scum came to the surface in the form of robber-bands, before whom the few peaceful inhabitants of the Ukraina — and

even of Moscow itself — quaked with fear. It was a clear case of sowing the wind and reaping the whirlwind! In the end Moscow sent armed expeditions against these bandits — to little effect, so well had she weeded out her black sheep into this rich border pasture — although many men were caught and hanged, as a certain Bandit Ballad narrates.

The smouldering fires broke out into a disastrous conflagration when the first False Dmitry — the Pretender — laid claim to the throne. These dare-devils pricked up their ears: their nostrils scented a fine feast, exactly to their taste: — and when the False Dmitry, the renegade monk, Grigory Otrepiev, made his appearance among them, they acknowledged him as their Tzar, in the face of positive proof that the lad Dmitry was dead and buried; and they settled the domestic question by throwing their forces against Moscow in his favour. In like manner, after Otrepiev's death, they supported another pretender, "The Bandit of Tushino," as he is called. No one derived any advantage from this — except the False Dmitry. Truth to tell, the course of these desperadoes was not so mad as it appears on first sight. If they had pronounced against this Pretender, the Poles, who were pushing his claims and prowling about the Ukraina, would have annihi-

lated them. Moscow was too far away, and powerless to protect them. So, with keen instinct for politics and for self-preservation, the lowest classes, brigands, fugitive serfs and peasants — the " thews and sinews " of the Ukraina — flocked to the standard of the Bandit of Tushino, robbing and murdering all who opposed or did not join them,— which meant, chiefly, the landed gentry and the citizens of the towns. The women, in particular, the *Bárynya* and *báryshnya* — wives and daughters of the gentry — were compelled to marry these scoundrels. All these things, naturally, inspired such terror in the landed gentry of the Ukraina that they deserted their estates and fled to Moscow.

It is this last phase of the story which " Bárynya-Sudárynya " depicts — the situation of the " Lady-Madam-Lady " (to give it another version) — in the refrain of the songs. Thus, evidently, it sets forth one side of the story, while the " Kamarynskaya " depicts the other, or the morals and manners of that particular Ukraina as a whole, the actors in both songs being identical. Probably the author of these ballads, with their free, untrammelled form and ancient " Kamarynskaya nakedness "— was, like their hero, a composite — the entire population of the Kamarynskaya Ukraina.

The tradition did not die out. The gentry did

not all flee before the representatives of perfect freedom — and did not escape contamination. To that sad fact a decidedly racy historical incident bears witness. I cannot forbear citing it, to complete the picture, although this leaf from the chronicles of a noble family refers to a later date. —About ten miles from Konotop, in the Government of Kursk, is a spot noted in history, called Kosáchya Slobodá (*slobodá* meaning a large village on the high road with the adjective of *kazák* added), because there, in 1672, took place the election of Ivan Samoilovich to the office of Hetman of Little Russia. Our concern, however, is not with the Hetman, but with the exploits of a lady who lived near the village — whose alternative name, by the way, was Kosáchya Dubróva, or The Kazáks' Oak-forest. This strip of the Ukraina of Moscow, adjoining the Hétmanshschina (the Hetman's Domain), was, for a long time, the arena of insubordination and high-handed deeds which the landed proprietors permitted themselves to indulge in, taking advantage of their remoteness from the long arm of justice and the possibility of effecting a speedy escape, in case of need, to the Hétmanshschina. The names of noble families which still exist are mentioned in the complaints to the Crown of their victims. Among the noble families was that of Durov. Tradition has pre-

served the memory of Marfa Durov (or Durova) as a famous brigand. Few men can have rivalled — or even equalled — her. She flourished in the reign of the Empress Anna Ivannovna (1730–1740). The family was influential; Marfa was wealthy and extraordinarily cantankerous. On being left a widow, she recruited her lovers from her own peasants and neighbouring residents; and she occupied her abundant leisure with highway robbery. Recruiting her band from her peasants, she made raids upon her neighbours. Mounted cross-saddle, man-fashion, with a gun slung across her shoulder, a pistol in her pocket, and a sword girt at her side, she galloped at the head of her horde, and behind followed with carts, to transport the booty, more peasants. She ordered them not to sow or reap, telling them it was not worth while to sweat and bake in the hot sun: they could obtain all they needed gratis, provided by the labours of other people. Marfa was in the habit of making her raids in July and August, chiefly, and her slaves, at her bidding, carried home ricks of freshly-reaped grain, stacks of hay, and droves of horned cattle, sheep and pigs — whatever they encountered, in short. She went shares with them when the plunder reached her estate. The shepherds dared offer no resistance. Sometimes, by way of variety, Marfa would make a raid on a

settlement, or the manor of a land-owner — and if resistance was difficult, the victims submitted. Then Marfa would order them to give her minions food and drink and would content herself with tribute. She frequently broke into the chests and store-houses of the nobility, and selected for her own use whatever she required; after which she compelled the sufferers to take a solemn oath (and confirm it by kissing a holy picture), that they would not proceed against her for robbery. If they refused, she threatened to call again and ruin them completely, or "let loose the red cock"— that is to say, set fire to their buildings. A good many were wise enough to keep their oath, and them Marfa, as a rule, troubled no further. But those who violated their oath and complained of her suffered for it. The authorities were greedy for bribes, and Marfa Durov was lavish when occasion demanded. All the rural police of the county gave her a free hand, as they did to other insubordinate persons of noble rank, because they grew rich thereby. When complaints were lodged against Marfa, they were generally reported "not proved," because of the impossibility of discovering that the robbery had been perpetrated by none other than Marfa in person. She, like several others in the county, paid regular graft to the police. So the petitioner gained nothing by his

complaint, and Marfa felt secure in meting out to him the punishment which she had promised.

Sometimes these noble bandits disagreed among themselves, and civil war broke out. Once such a nobly-born robber attacked Marfa's home with some of his horde, and a bloody combat ensued, which ended in the defeat of Marfa, and the reduction of her buildings and her whole village to ashes. She and her sons (who were still minors) made their escape by hiding in a swamp. But Marfa assembled her horde again (several of her capable assistants had been slain in that fray), and, before proceeding to rebuild her village, she raided her rival's estate, burned his manor to ashes, and slew him with her own hand, her men following her example with his men who had accompanied him in his call upon her.

But Marfa made handsome amends, according to her lights — she had his name and the names of all the people who were slain in this affair, inscribed in a Book of Remembrance, with the commentary, " slain." This was, also, the practice of Ivan the Terrible in regard to his victims; and in keeping with it was the ardent piety of both Tzar Ivan and Marfa. The souls of their murdered victims are prayed for to the present day, and will be, forever.

Marfa was noted for her external devoutness,

for she observed all the fasts appointed by the Church (and they are onerously numerous in the Orthodox Russian Church!), never missed a church service on Sundays and Holy Days, and was very zealous in the matter of money donations and of gifts to the Church. When she was about to set out on a piratical expedition, she was accustomed to go first to the priest at Kosáchya Dubróva, and order him to hold a Prayer-Service, and entreat God to grant success to her undertaking. "Hearken, *bátko!*" she would say to the priest, "if we are successful, we'll bring you a present, because that will mean that you have obtained success for us from God by your prayers. But if we are not successful, then you must excuse me, but we'll warm your hide for you!" So when the priest heard that Marfa Durov had been unsuccessful he apprehended disaster for himself; and she would ride up and administer a sound horsewhipping, because he had not understood how to pray luck for her from God! — Probably she made him hold a *Te Deum* service in case of success. Assuredly, the unhappy priest of Kosáchya Dubróva had on his hands one of the most complicated cases of conscience and faith upon record!

When Marfa's sons grew up they participated in their mother's crimes — and she instigated them to forms of crime which she could not perpetrate her-

self. Things went on in this fashion — the priest, unless already reduced to a moral jelly by previous experiences, must have been quite shocked by his power with God — for six or seven years. Then one of the sons proposed something which bettered his mother's teaching — a crime against which Marfa herself revolted; and he also fell out with his brothers. So far, the authorities had never been able to catch Marfa and her gang in the very act of crime, as would be necessary if they were to deal with her effectively. Now, this son secretly gave information in proper quarters as to the time when Marfa and his brothers, with their minions, were intending to "go a-hunting" (as Marfa was wont, pleasantly, to express it), and she was captured, tried, condemned and exiled to Siberia. This third son, who had refrained from taking part in her final "hunt," after betraying her and his brothers, remained the sole heir of the ancestral estate. But he did not reign over it long. His mother, at her departure into exile, had cursed him. Burdened with this curse, he fell into melancholy, and committed suicide. Evidently he, like the priest of Kosáchya Dubróva, was afflicted with a complicated case of conscience.

In the famous Epic Songs of Russia, composed, probably, in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries, the greatest of the *Bogatýri* (Heroes), Ilya

of Murom, is always referred to as "the old Kazák." But in ancient times, as any peasant of the far-away localities in the North where these Epics still are sung, will explain, heroic deeds were performed indifferently by men and women, the men being called "bogatýri" and the women "polyánitzi." So perhaps Marfa Durov ranks — by courtesy, at least — as a Polyánitza. At any rate, she was more or less distantly related to Taras Bulba!

The Kazakdom of Little Russia — which is, in general, the region dealt with in Gogol's story — bore the same general character as that of Great Russia which acknowledged the authority of the Kingdom of Moscow. The Epic Songs, and "The Old Kazák, Ilya of Murom," originated there. Kazák and fugitive serf came to be, practically, synonymous terms.

The term "kazák" is ancient,— and the most rational of the explanations of it is, that of old, among the Turks, it was applied to a mounted warrior, lightly armed,— and somehow inferior as a soldier. In the Polovetzk Dictionary of the year 1303 the word is written "kozak." Among the Tatárs, with whom the Ukraina was compelled to live in such close contact, on such close terms of enmity, from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, "kozak" has the meaning of a fine man, an inde-

pendent military adventurer — again of low grade (the Turks and Tatárs belong to the same Ural-Altaic stock, along with the Hungarians and the Finns),— with shades of meaning indicating a vagabond, a partisan, a homeless roamer, a nomad. Altogether, it seems to describe the kazák of the early periods very thoroughly. With the status of the kazák as an agriculturist, with a fixed home, a soldier of the Russian Army, and with the divisions into kazáks of the Don, the Ural, the Terek, the Kuban and so forth, and the conditions of his service, it is not necessary here to deal.

The one appellation which is lost in the present divisions is precisely the historic one of the Zaporozhtzi. Zaporozhe, the domain of the kazáks of our story, is somewhat difficult to delimit (without entering into too much detail) on the present map of Russia. A large slice — practically all of the present Government of Tauris (not counting the Crimea), starting from the lagoon of Ochakov at the southwest point, bounded on the south by the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, and, in a curving line, northeast, east, south again, by the Dnyeper, the Konskaya and the Berda rivers — was the territory of the Nogai Tatárs. Zaporozhe lay to the west, north and east of this Tatár territory. Beginning with Ochakov, at the western point of the Dnyeper lagoon, Zaporozhe was enclosed on the

west by the river Bug and the Siniukha, curving northeast just above Novomirgorod and to a point just above Kremenchug on the Dnyeper; southeast along the Dnyeper, to the mouth of the Orel; northeast, following the Orel but some distance to the north of it, and with a long point northeast to about Borki (northeast of Poltava) ; thence southeast, to a point about at Bakhmat on the Northern Don; then slightly southwest to Mariupol on the Sea of Azov, where it again joins the Territory of the Nogai Tatárs. The Territory of the Kazáks of the Don was its eastern neighbour; but there was no real differentiation between the Don Kazáks and those of Zaporozhe. It was not uncommon for men of either camp to go to the other and dwell there, unquestioned, perfectly welcome, like members of the organisation, at pleasure, returning home when affairs or inclination called.

The actual origin of the Kazáks of Zaporozhe and its date, cannot be determined. In all probability, their pioneers were the men who, loving a free life, followed the calling of fishermen on the lower Dnyeper, and hunted wild animals on the surrounding steppe of the region, known as *Nízovya* — the lowlands — near the Black Sea. In course of time they organised, to repel the raids of the Turks, Tatárs and Poles. In short, they were the result of the eternal conflict between the

settled, agricultural life, and the nomadic freebooter life of the plains.

The Falls or Rapids from which the actors in Gogol's story derived their name, Zaporozhtzi — the Kazáks of "Beyond the Rapids"— begin about ten miles below Yekaterinoslav (Katherine's Glory), on the Dnyeper, the worst of them, about half a mile in length, bearing the suggestive title of "Nenasýtetz," the Insatiable. In the tract below the Insatiable was situated the famous capital of Zaporozhe, the Syech — or, in the soft, Little Russian variant of Russia, the Sicha. Syech or Sicha means, simply, a cutting or clearing in the forest. Obviously, that was precisely the origin of the name. As there existed, at different times, at least eight Syechs (possibly ten), it is not surprising that the location of the capital should appear to the reader decidedly indefinite.

About one hundred and sixty-five miles below Yekaterinoslav, opposite Alexandrovsk, in the Dnyeper, lies the Island of Khortitza, where stood the first Syech. Originally — so the ancient Greek chronicles state — this beautiful island held a monastery inhabited by many monks. The Russians, it is said, had regarded it as a sacred place, and (before the introduction of Christianity) sacrificed there to their deities birds, and even the highly-prized dogs of the sort now known as

Borzói, or Russian Wolf-hounds. Here, in the beginning of 1550, Dmitry Vishnevetzky built a fortress, and assembled kazakdom around him. Vishnevetzky was a fairly wealthy magnate, owner of several villages in southern Volhynia. Instead of following the example of the men of his day and modestly increasing and rounding out his "fortune," he devoted himself to the fashionable sport of the period on the Border Marches — fighting the Tatárs. He entered the public arena in 1540, but, not content with defensive fighting, such as was carried on by the Border Chieftains, and magnates, he made up his mind to realise, in concrete form, the idea evidently cherished by many people of that epoch, but, so far, not put into execution, and built a castle on the islands of the Dnyeper, as a bulwark against the Tatárs. This idea of Vishnevetzky to found a permanent, strongly-fortified position on an island of the Dnyeper, did not fail to exercise an influence on the existing tendency to connect the winter camps of the hunters and fishermen into a chain of small fortresses defended by stockades, which, in turn, connected with a central *kosh,* or camp, whose ruler was the *Koshevói* — the chief of the camp — on the Lowlands. But Vishnevetzky's experiment with Khortitza Castle proved that no reliance could be placed on strong walls and cannon as defences against the

Turks and the Tatárs, who would find means for overcoming them. In January, 1557, the Khan of the Crimea attacked Khortitza Castle, in vain: but it was evident that some inaccessible location must be chosen; so the Sicha began to lead a nomadic life, like its inhabitants. The original *kurén,* which came, in the end, to signify a large barrack (and the troop which occupied it), was a small wooden shack, mounted on wheels, which enabled it to gallop after its owner, when the Sicha began its wanderings among the labyrinth of islands, shallows and bays, where the estuary of the Dnyeper ebbed and flowed. Such a Sicha could not, obviously, be made a centre all at once, and its origin, in the usual sense, must be ascribed to the ten years or so following Vishnevetzky's experiment and failure. It moved on down the Dyneper in agile bounds — and then returned, apparently, twice, to locations close to some previously occupied and abandoned.

The pathetic picture of the old Kazák gazing out across the Black Sea and mourning for his Ostap would suggest that the Syech to which Bulba returned after the defeat might have been Number Seven — the one situated at Aleshki, twelve miles from Kherson, on the salty lagoon of the Dnyeper — one of the famous " limans " in the neighbourhood of the Black Sea, whose bottom-slime consti-

tutes a famous remedy for scrofula, gout, rheumatism, nervous and cutaneous diseases. This Syech, which lasted for twenty-five years (their existence was, as a rule, rather brief), was the only one within easy riding distance of the Black Sea. But the statement that the Syech was then situated at Khortitza contradicts such a theory. That statement also proves that the "Union" alluded to was the political arrangement described in my Footnote. Another "Union" equally famous and productive of battle deserves mention under existing circumstances, although later in date by at least thirty years (presumably) than the death of Taras.

That "Union," originated by a couple of Bishops in southwest Russia, who had good cause to apprehend expulsion at the hands of the authorities of the Orthodox Greco-Russian Church, began in 1596, and consisted of a so-called union with the Roman Church. These bishops acknowledged the headship of the Pope of Rome, and stipulated not only that they were to retain their places, but that their "Uniate" Church was to retain its own language — Old Church Slavonic — and its own customs. They promised, in return (in the customary over-confident, grandiloquent style), the adhesion of the whole Russian Church to this unauthorised, secret compact. They were never

able to keep the bargain, and a suggestion of the intense hatred and opposition to that hybrid church, and of the increased bitterness towards the Roman Church, is conveyed in this story.

In the course of the centuries which have followed this hybrid church has been imposed, by misrepresentation and by force, on many inhabitants of Galicia, and Orthodox Slavs along the western borderland; and the compact regarding the retention of their customs has been violated by the imposition of the newest Roman dogmas,— the infallibility of the Pope, the Immaculate Conception, and others. That " Uniate " Church is more commonly known as " the Greek Catholic Church," meaning " the Roman Church of the Greek Rite," in contradistinction to the ancient, original Christian church, the Orthodox Greco-Russian Catholic Apostolic Church of the East. Thousands of immigrants to the United States from Galicia belong to this church — and many thousands of them, including their priests, who did belong to it in the old country, have abandoned it here and returned to the church of their fathers, the Russian Orthodox Church, chiefly in consequence of the attempts which have been made here to deprive them of the last remnants of their ancient customs, including their married priesthood, and

the Chrismation (Confirmation) of infants at their Baptism. The question of this "Uniate" Church is playing a very large rôle in the present great European War, which is known in Russia (partly because of this point which worried old Taras) as "The War of Liberation."

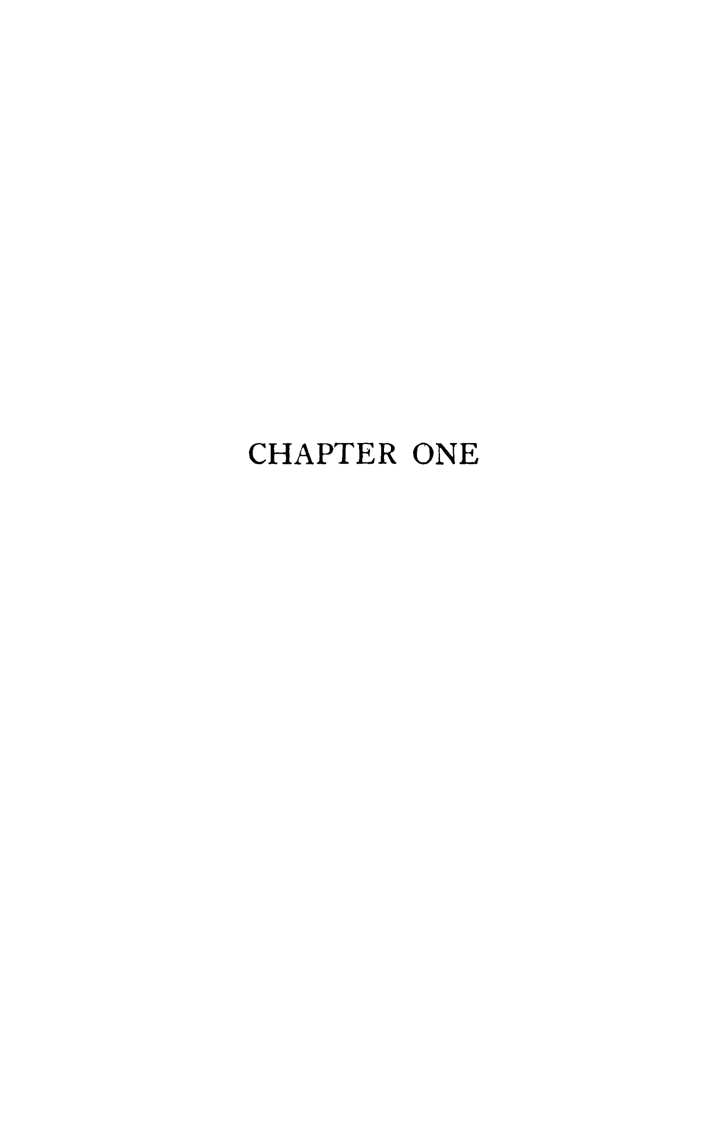
Of Gogol and his work in general, and of Taras Bulba in particular, it is not necessary to speak at length. It is less indispensable now than it was when, many years ago, I published translations of *Dead Souls;* some of the *Tales from a Farm-house near Dikanko* and its sequel *Mirgorod;* and of *Taras Bulba,* which forms part of the last-named volume. (The present version of *Taras Bulba* has been so completely revised that it is practically new.)

It will suffice to say that Nikolai V. Gógol was born in the hamlet of Sorochintzi, situated on the borders of Poltava and Mirgorod counties, in the Government of Poltava, on March 12 (some say March 19), Old Style, 1809, and died on February 21 (Old Style), 1852. The first of his *Tales from a Farm-house* was published in 1830. *Mirgorod,* the fresh series, came out in book form in 1835. *Taras Bulba* and most of the tales in that volume, as in the first, were of the same general romantic or fantastic character. The rest

were of the naturalistic type which earned for him, — in conjunction with the rest — the position of Founder of the modern Realistic School.

ISABEL F. HAPGOOD.

August 9, 1915.
NEW YORK,



CHAPTER ONE

TARAS BULBA

I

"HEY there, son, turn round. How ridiculous you look! What's that priest's cassock you're wearing? Do all the fellows in the Academy go around in that style?"

With such words did old Bulba greet his two sons who had been studying in the Kiev preparatory school, and had just returned home to their father.

His boys had only just dismounted from their horses. They were a pair of stalwart lads, who still wore a sheepishly distrustful look, like students just out of school. Their strong, healthy faces were covered with the first down, which, as yet, had never been touched by the razor. They were very much upset by such a reception on the part of their father, and stood stock-still, with their eyes fixed upon the earth.

"Stand still! Stand still! Let me have a good look at you," he continued, turning them round.

"How long your svitkas[1] are. What svitkas! There never were such svitkas in the world before. Just run, one of you! I'll see whether he won't get wound up in the skirts, and tumble on the ground!"

"Don't laugh, Dad!" said the elder of them, at last.

"See how touchy they are! Why shouldn't I laugh?"

"Because you shan't, although you are my dad; but if you do laugh, by God, I'll thrash you!"

"A nice sort of son you are! What! Your dad?" said Taras Bulba, retreating several paces in amazement.

"Yes, even my father. I don't stop to consider who deals the insult, and I spare no one."

"So you want to fight me? With your fists?"

"Any way."

"Well, come on with your fists," said Taras Bulba, stripping up his sleeves. "I'll see what sort of a fellow you are at a fight."

And father and son, in place of a friendly greeting after long separation, began to plant heavy blows on each other's ribs, back and chest, now retreating and taking each other's measure with sidelong glances, now attacking afresh.

[1] A half-long upper garment of cloth, used by the South Russians. I. F. H.

" Look, good people! The old man has gone mad! he has lost his wits completely! " screamed their thin, pale old mother, who was standing on the threshold and had not yet managed to embrace her darling boys. " The children have come home, we have not seen them for over a year; and now the Lord only knows what he has taken into his head — he's pummelling them! "

" Yes, he's a glorious fighter," said Bulba, pausing; " by God! that was a good one! " he continued, somewhat as though he were excusing himself; " yes, although he has never tried his hand at it before. He'll make a good kazák! Now, welcome, my lad, let's greet each other; " and father and son began to exchange kisses. " Good, little son! see that you thrash every one else as you have thrashed me; don't you knuckle under to any one. All the same, your outfit is ridiculous — What's this rope hanging here? — And you, you clumsy lout, why are you standing there with your arms dangling? " said he, turning to the younger lad. " How about you, you son of a dog — why don't you also give me a licking? "

" There's another of his crazy ideas! " said the mother, who had managed, in the meantime, to embrace the younger boy. " Who ever heard of such a thing as a man's own children beating him? That will do for the present: the child is young, he

has had a long journey, he is tired." (The child was over twenty, and about seven feet tall.) "He ought to rest and eat something; and he sets him to fighting!"

"Oho, I see that you've been raised a pet!" said Bulba. "Don't listen to your mother, my son; she's a woman, she doesn't know anything. What do you want with petting? Your petting is a clear field and a good horse,—that's what it is! And do you see this sword? that's your mother! All the rest of the things with which they stuff your head is rubbish; the academy, books, primers, philosophy, and all that, the devil only knows what, I spit upon it all!" And here Bulba added a word which is not used in print. "But here, now, this is the best of all: I'll take you to Zaporozhe[1] next week. There's where you'll find the sort of science that's the real thing. That's the school for you: only there will you acquire sense."

"And are they to stay at home only one week?" said the thin, old mother piteously, with tears in her eyes. "The poor boys will have no chance to go about, no chance to get acquainted with the home where they were born; I shall not have a chance to feast my eyes upon them to the full."

"Stop that, stop your howling, old woman! A

[1] The Kazák country beyond (za) the Rapids (porózhe) of the Dnyeper. I. F. H.

kazák is not born to run around with women. You'd like to hide them both under your petticoat, and sit upon them as if they were hen's eggs. Go, get along with you, and let us have everything there is on the table in a trice. We don't want any pastry puffs, honey-cakes, poppy-cakes, or any other messes: bring us a whole sheep, give us a goat, mead forty years old, and as much corn-brandy as possible, not with raisins and all sorts of frills, but plain, sparkling brandy, which foams and hisses like mad."

Bulba led his sons into the best room of the cottage; and two handsome women servants, in coin necklaces, who were putting the rooms in order, ran out quickly. Evidently, they were frightened by the arrival of the young men, who did not care to be familiar with any one; or else they merely wanted to maintain their feminine custom of screaming and rushing off headlong at the sight of a man, and then screening their lively shame for a long time with their sleeves. The room was furnished in accordance with the fashion of that period,— concerning which vivid hints still linger in the songs and epic lyrics, that are no longer sung in the Ukraina, by bearded old blind men, to the gentle thrumming of the bandura, in the presence of the people thronging about them, — in the taste of that warlike and troublous time,

when skirmishes and battles began to occur in the Ukraina over the Union.[1] Everything was neat, plastered with coloured clay. On the walls hung sabres, kazák whips, nets for birds, fishing-nets and guns, cleverly carved powder-horns, gilded bits for horses, and hobble-chains with silver disks. The windows were small, with round, dull panes, such as are to be found nowadays only in ancient churches, through which it was impossible to see without raising the one movable pane. Around the windows and doors ran incised bands painted red. On shelves in the corners stood jugs, bottles and flasks of green and blue glass, carved silver cups, and gilded goblets of various makes,— Venetian, Turkish, Cherkessian,— which had arrived in Bulba's cottage by various roads, at third and fourth hand, something which was quite of common occurrence in those doughty days. There were birch benches all round the walls, a huge table under the holy pictures in the corner of honour, and a capacious oven all covered with parti-coloured tiles, with projections, recesses and an annex at the rear. All this was extremely familiar to our two young men, who had come home every year during the holidays — and had come because they had no horses, as yet, and be-

[1] The projected union between Poland and Lithuania, to include also Little Russia: (effected in 1569, at Liublin). I. F. H.

cause it was not customary to permit the students to ride on horseback. All they had was long scalp-locks, which every kazák who bore arms was entitled to pull. It was only at the end of their course that Bulba sent them, from his stud, a couple of young stallions.

Bulba, to celebrate the arrival of his sons, ordered all the Sótniks [1] and all the officers of the troop who were of any consequence, to be summoned; and when two of them arrived with the Yesaúl [2] Dmitro Tovkach, his old comrade, he immediately presented his boys, saying: "Just look at them; aren't they gallant lads! I shall send them to the Syech [3] shortly." The guests congratulated Bulba and both the young men, and told them they were engaged in good business, and that there was no better knowledge for a young man than a knowledge of the Zaporozhian Syech.

"Now, my friends, seat yourselves, each where it pleases him best, at table. Now, my lads, first of all let's have a drink of brandy!" Thus spake Bulba. "God's blessing be on us! Welcome, dear sons; you, Ostap, and you, Andríi. God grant that you may always be successful in war! That you may beat the Mussulmans, and beat the

[1] Lieutenant in the rest of the army. I. F. H.

[2] Captain of Kazáks. I. F. H.

[3] The headquarters of the Zaporozhian Kazáks. I. F. H.

Turks, and beat the Tatars; and when the Poles undertake any expedition against our Faith, then may you give the Poles a drubbing also. Now, hold out your glasses,— well, and is the brandy good? What's brandy in Latin? Somehow, my lad, the Latins were stupid: they didn't know there was such a thing in the world as corn-brandy. What the deuce was the name of the man who used to write Latin rhymes? I'm not very strong on reading and writing, so I don't quite remember. Was it Horace?"

"Did any one ever see such a dad!" thought the elder son, Ostap. "The old dog knows everything, but he's always shamming."

"I don't believe the Archimandrite[1] allowed you so much as a smell of brandy," Taras went on. "Come, confess, my lads, they beat you with fresh birch-switches on your backs and everything else that a kazák owns; and perhaps when you grew conceited with what you knew, they flogged you with whips. And not on Saturday only, I fancy, but of a Wednesday and a Thursday, as well."

"There's no good in recalling the past, Dad," replied Ostap; "that's all over and done with."

"Just let 'em try it now!" said Andríi. "Just

[1] Abbot. Education was in the hands of the monasteries of that day in Kiev. I. F. H.

let anybody meddle with me now; just let any Tatar gang come along now and they'll learn what a kazák's sword is like."

"Good, my son, by God, good! And when it comes to that, I'll go with you; by God, I will! Why the devil should I tarry here? To become a sower of buckwheat and a housekeeper, to tend sheep and swine, and fondle my wife? Devil take them! I'm a kazák; I'll have none of them! I'll go with you to Zaporozhe to carouse, by God, I will!" And Bulba gradually grew warmer and warmer, and at last rose from the table, and in a thorough rage, striking a majestic pose, he stamped his foot. "We'll go to-morrow! Why tarry? What enemy can we besiege here? What's this cottage to us? What do we want of all this? What are pots to us?" So saying, he began to smash the pots and flasks, and hurl them about.

The poor old woman, well used to such behaviour on the part of her husband, looked sadly on from her seat on the wall-bench. She did not dare to say anything; but when she heard the decision which was so terrible for her, she could not refrain from tears. She looked at her children, from whom so speedy a separation was threatened, and it is impossible to describe the

full force of the speechless grief that seemed to quiver in her eyes and on her lips, which were convulsively pressed together.

Bulba was terribly headstrong. His was one of those characters which could arise only in that troublous sixteenth century, in that half-nomadic corner of Europe, when the whole of Southern, primeval Russia, deserted by its Princes, was laid waste, burned to ashes by savage hordes of Mongolian bandits; when a man, deprived of house and home became recklessly brave here; when, amid conflagrations, in sight of threatening neighbours, and eternal danger, he settled down and grew used to looking them squarely in the face, having unlearned the knowledge that there was such a thing as fear in the world; when the ancient, peaceable Slav spirit was seized with a warlike flame, and there was instituted Kazakdom,—a free, wild manifestation of Russian nature,—and when all the river-country, the lands down stream, the slopes of the river banks and convenient sites were populated by kazáks whose number no man knew, and whose bold comrades had a right to reply to the Sultan's inquiry as to how many there were of them, "Who knows? We are scattered all over the steppe: wherever there is a hillock, there, also is a Kazák." It was, in fact, a most remarkable manifestation of Russian

strength; dire necessity wrested it from the bosom of the people. In place of the original principalities were small towns filled with huntsmen and dog-keepers, in place of the warring and bartering petty Princes in cities, there arose great colonies, hamlets, and districts bound together by a common danger, and by hatred toward the heathen robbers. Every one already knows from history how their incessant fighting and roving life saved Europe from the savage invasions which threatened to overwhelm her. The Polish Kings, finding themselves, in place of the Appanage Princes, sovereigns — though distant and feeble,— over those vast territories, understood, nevertheless, the significance of the kazáks, and the advantages of this warlike, lawless life. They encouraged them and flattered this propensity. Under their distant rule, the Hetmans, chosen from among the kazáks themselves, transformed the districts and hamlets into regiments and uniform provinces. It was not an army in the regulation sense, no one would have noticed its existence; but in case of a war or a general uprising, it required a week and no more, for every man to make his appearance on horseback, fully armed, receiving only one ducat in payment from the King; and in two weeks, such an army was assembled as no recruiting officers would ever have been able to collect. When

the campaign was ended, the warrior went back to the fields and meadows, and the lower reaches of the Dnyeper, fished, traded, brewed his beer, and was a free kazák once more. His foreign contemporaries rightly marvelled at his wonderful qualities. There was no trade which the kazák did not know; he could distil brandy, build a peasant cart, make powder, do blacksmithing and locksmithing — and, in addition, amuse himself madly, drinking and carousing as only a Russian can,— all this he was equal to. Besides the registered kazáks, who considered themselves bound to present themselves in time of war, it was possible to collect at any time, in case of dire need, a whole army of volunteers. All that was required was that the Captains should traverse all the market-places and squares of the villages and hamlets, and shout at the top of their voices, as they stood erect in their carts: "Hey, ye beer-sellers and beer-brewers! Have done with brewing and with lolling on your ovens, and feeding the flies with your fat bodies! Go, win glory and knightly honour! Ye ploughmen, ye sowers of buckwheat, cease to follow the plough and to soil your yellow buskins in the earth, and court women, and waste your knightly strength! 'Tis time to win kazák glory!" and these words acted like sparks falling on dry wood. The husbandman broke his plough,

the beer-sellers threw away their casks, the brewers destroyed their barrels; the mechanic and the merchant sent trade and shop to the devil, smashed the pots in their houses, and, every man jack of them, mounted his horse. In short, the Russian character here acquired a broad, mighty scope, a powerful exterior.

Taras was one of the band of old, original Colonels; he was born for warlike emotions, and was noted for the rough uprightness of his character. At that period the influence of Poland was beginning to make itself felt among the Russian nobility. Many had already adopted Polish customs, had introduced luxury, splendid staffs of servants, hawks, huntsmen, dinners and palaces. This was not to the taste of Taras. He liked the simple life of the kazáks, and quarrelled with those of his comrades who inclined to the Warsaw party, calling them the serfs of the Polish nobles. Ever turbulent, he regarded himself as a legal defender of the Faith. He would enter arbitrarily into villages where the sole complaint was with regard to the oppression of the revenue farmers, and the imposition of fresh taxes on each hearth. He and his kazáks would execute justice on them; and he laid down the rule for himself, that in three cases it was always proper to have recourse to the sword: namely, when warrant-

officers did not show due respect for their superior officers, and stood with their caps on in the latter's presence; or when any one made light of the Orthodox Faith [1] and did not observe the customs of his ancestors; and, finally, when the enemy were Mussulmans or Turks, against whom he considered it permissible, in every case, to unsheath the sword for the glory of Christianity.

Now he rejoiced in anticipation at the thought of how he would present himself with his two sons in the Syech, and say: "See what fine young fellows I have brought you!" how he would introduce them to all his old comrades, steeled in war; how he would watch their first exploits in the art of war, and in carousing, which was regarded as one of the chief qualities of a knight. At first he had intended to send them forth alone; but at the sight of their freshness, stature and robust personal beauty, his martial spirit flamed up within him, and he resolved to go with them himself, the very next day, although there was no necessity for this except his obstinate self-will. He began at once to bustle about and give orders; he selected horses and trappings for his young sons, inspected the stables and storehouses, and chose servants to

[1] Orthodox means, specifically, in Russia, a member of the Greco-Russian Church, or anything connected with that Church — the Catholic Church of the East. I. F. H.

accompany them on the morrow. He delegated his power to Captain Tovkach, and gave, along with it, a strict command to appear with his entire troop the very instant he should receive a message from him at the Syech. Although he was half-seas over, and the effects of his drinking-bout still lingered in his brain, he forget nothing; he even gave orders that the horses should be watered, their cribs filled, and that they should be fed with the largest and best wheat; and then he came into the house, fatigued with all his labours.

"Well, boys! We must sleep now, but to-morrow we shall do as God appoints. Don't prepare a bed for us! We need no bed; we'll sleep out doors."

Night had only just clasped the heavens in her embrace, but Taras always went to bed early. He threw himself down on a rug, and covered himself with a sheepskin coat; for the night air was quite sharp, and Bulba liked to be warmly covered when he was at home. He was soon snoring and the whole household speedily followed his example. All snored and grunted as they lay in different corners. The watchman went to sleep the first of all, because he had drunk more than any one else, in honour of his young masters' homecoming.

The poor mother alone slept not. She bent over the pillow of her darling boys as they lay side

by side; with a comb she smoothed their carelessly tangled young curls, and moistened them with her tears. She gazed at them with her whole being, with her every sense; she merged herself wholly in that gaze, and still she could not gaze enough. She had nourished them at her own breast, she had reared them and petted them; and now to see them only for an instant! "My sons! my darling sons, what will become of you? what awaits you?" she said, and tears stood in the furrows which disfigured her once beautiful face. In truth, she was to be pitied, as was every woman in that valorous epoch. She had lived only for a moment in love, only during the first fever of passion, only during the first flush of youth; and then her grim betrayer had deserted her for the sword, for his comrades and his carouses. She had seen her husband for two or three days in the course of a year, and then for a period of several years there had been no news of him. And when she had seen him, when they had lived together, what sort of a life had been hers? She had endured insults, even beatings; she had seen caresses bestowed merely out of pity; she had been a strange object amid that mob of heartless cavaliers, upon which the dissolute life of the Zaporozhe had cast a grim colouring of its own. Her pleasureless youth had flitted swiftly by; and her beautiful rosy cheeks and her bosom

had withered away unkissed, and become covered with premature wrinkles. All her love, all her feeling, everything that is tender and passionate in a woman had, in her case, been converted into the one sentiment of maternal love. With ardour, with passion, with tears, she hovered over her boys, like a gull of the steppe. Her sons, her darling sons, were being taken from her,— taken from her in such a way that she might never see them again! Who knows? Perchance a Tatár would cut off their heads in the very first skirmish, and she would never know where their deserted bodies lay, torn by the beasts of prey; and yet for each drop of their blood she would gladly give her whole self. Sobbing, she gazed into their eyes, even when all-powerful sleep began to close them, and said to herself: "Perhaps when Bulba wakes he will put off their departure for a brief day or two; perhaps he took it into his head to go so soon because he had been drinking hard."

The moon, from the height of heaven, had long since illuminated the whole courtyard filled with sleepers, the dense clump of willows, and the tall steppe grass which hid the wattled hedge. She still sat by the heads of her beloved sons, never removing her eyes from them for a moment, or even thinking of sleep. Already the horses, divining the approach of dawn, had ceased eating, and

lain down upon the grass; the topmost leaves of the willows began to rustle softly, and little by little the rippling rustle descended to their very bases. She sat there, unwearied, until daylight, and wished in her heart that the night might last as long as possible. From the steppe came the ringing neigh of a stallion; red tongues darted brightly athwart the sky.

Bulba suddenly awoke and sprang to his feet. He remembered perfectly well all that he had ordered the night before. "Now, my lads, time's up! you've slept enough! Water the horses! And where's the old woman?" (This was what he generally called his wife.) "Hurry up, old woman, get us something to eat; we've a long trip ahead of us."

The poor old woman, deprived of her last hope, slipped sadly into the cottage. While with tears she prepared what was needed for breakfast, Bulba issued his orders, went to the stable, and himself selected his best trappings for his boys.

The collegians were suddenly transformed. Red morocco boots with silver heels replaced their dirty old foot-gear; trousers wide as the Black Sea, with thousands of folds and plaits, were supported by golden girdles; from the girdles hung long, slender thongs, with tassels and other jingling things for pipes. The kazák coat, of brilliant

scarlet cloth, was confined by a flowered belt; embossed Turkish pistols were thrust into the belt; their swords clanged at their heels. Their faces, already slightly sunburned, seemed to have grown handsomer and whiter; their little black moustaches now set off more distinctly both their pallor and their strong, healthy, youthful complexions. Very handsome were they, beneath their black sheepskin caps, with golden crowns.

When their poor mother saw them she could not utter a word, and tears stood in her eyes.

"All ready there, now, sons! No time to waste!" said Bulba, at last. "Now we must all sit down together, in accordance with our Christian custom before a journey."

All seated themselves, not excepting the servants, who had been standing respectfully at the door.

"Now, Mother, bless your children," said Bulba. "Pray God that they may always fight bravely, always uphold knightly honour, always defend the faith of Christ; and if not, that they may perish, and their breath be no longer in the world.— Come to your mother, my boys; a mother's prayer saves on land and sea."

The mother, weak as all mothers are, embraced them, drew out two small holy images, and sobbing, hung one round each neck —"May God's

Mother . . keep you ! My dear little sons, forget not your mother . . . send some little word of yourselves . . . " she could say no more.

" Now boys, let's go ! " said Bulba.

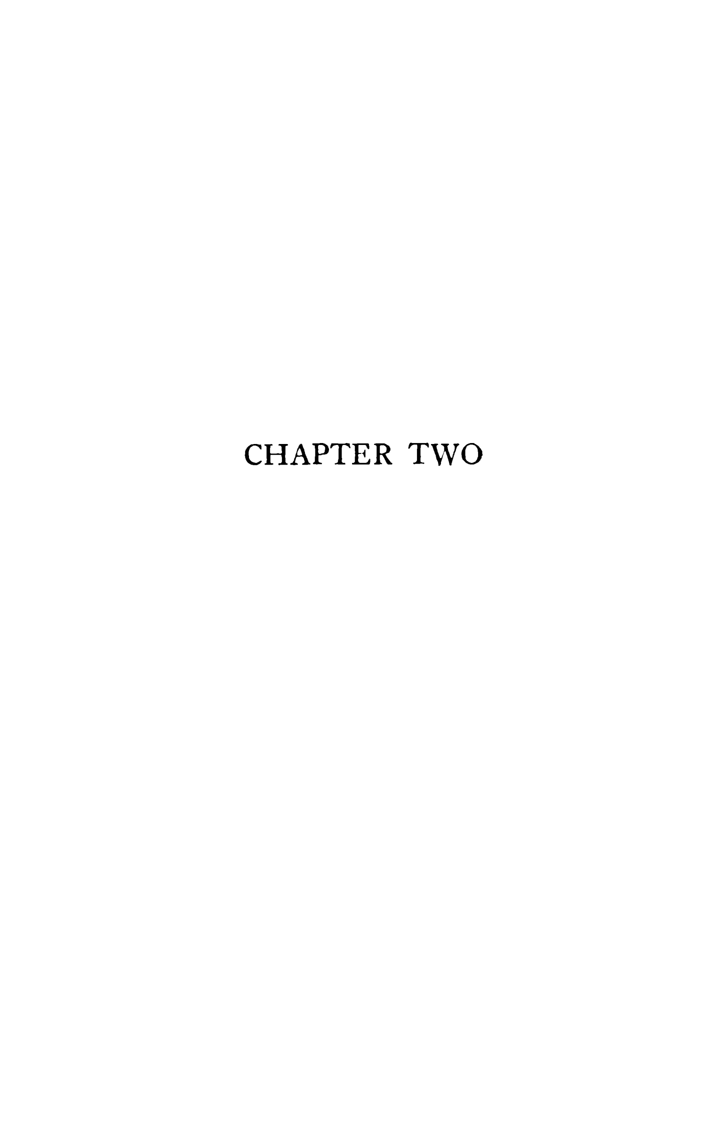
By the porch stood the horses, ready saddled. Bulba sprang upon his " Devil " which jumped madly rearward, feeling upon his back a load of twenty puds,[1] for Taras was extremely stout and heavy.

When the mother saw that her sons also were mounted on their horses, she flung herself toward the younger, whose features expressed somewhat more gentleness than those of his brother. She grasped his stirrup, clung to his saddle, and, with despair in her eyes, would not loose him from her hands. Two husky kazáks seized her carefully, and carried her into the cottage. But when they had already ridden through the gate, with all the agility of a wild goat, utterly out of keeping with her years, she rushed through the gate, with irresistible strength stopped a horse, and embraced one of her sons with a sort of senseless vehemence. Then they led her away once more.

The young kazáks rode on sadly, repressing their tears out of fear of their father who, on his

[1] A pud is about forty pounds. I. F. H.

side, was somewhat agitated, although he strove not to show it. The day was grey; the greenery shone brightly; the birds twittered rather discordantly. They glanced back as they rode away. Their farm seemed to have sunk into the earth. All that was visible above the surface was the two chimneys of their modest cottage, and the crests of the trees up which they had been wont to climb like squirrels; before them still stretched the meadow by which they could recall the whole history of their lives, from the years when they had rolled in its dewey grass, up to the years when they had awaited in it a black-bowed kazák maiden, who ran timidly across it with her quick, young feet. And now only one pole above the well, with the cart-wheel fastened on top, rises solitary against the sky; already the plain across which they have been riding appears a hill in the distance, and has concealed everything. Farewell childhood, and games, and everything — farewell !



CHAPTER TWO

II

ALL three horsemen rode on in silence. Old Taras was thinking of the distant past; before him passed his youth, his years — his vanished years, over which the kazák always weeps, wishing that his life might be all youth. He wondered whom of his former comrades he should meet in the Syech. He reckoned up how many were already dead, how many were still alive. Tears formed slowly in his eyes, and his grey head drooped dejectedly.

His sons were occupied with other thoughts. But we must speak more at length of his sons. They had been sent at the age of twelve years to the academy at Kiev, because all honourable officials of that epoch considered it indispensable to give their children an education, even if it were utterly forgotten afterwards. Like all who entered the free academy, they were then wild, having been reared in unrestricted freedom; and there, for the first time, they were generally smoothed down a bit, and acquired a certain something common to them all, which caused them

to bear a sort of universal resemblance to one another.

The elder, Ostap, began his career by running away in the course of the first year. He was brought back, terribly flogged, and set down again to his books. Four times did he bury his primer in the earth; and four times, after bestowing upon him an inhuman thrashing, did they buy him a new one. But he would have repeated his performance for the fifth time, doubtless, had not his father given him a solemn assurance that he would keep him at service in the monastery for twenty years, and had he not sworn to start with, that he should never behold Zaporozhe so long as he lived, unless he learned all the sciences in the academy. The odd point about it was, that he who said this was that same Taras Bulba who condemned all learning, and counselled his boys, as we have seen, not to trouble themselves about it at all. From that moment, Ostap began to sit over his tiresome books with extraordinary assiduity, and before long he stood on a level with the best. The style of education in that age was widely at variance with the manner of life: these scholastic, grammatical and theological subtleties never were used and never were met with in real life. Those who studied them — even the most scholastic of the lot — could never put their

knowledge to any practical use whatsoever. The most learned men of those days were even more ignorant than the rest, because they were entirely removed from all experience. Moreover, the republican constitution of the academy, the appalling multitude of young, stalwart, healthy fellows, — all these factors combined, were bound to arouse in them an activity quite outside the limits of their studies. Sometimes the poor fare, sometimes the frequent punishments of fasting, sometimes the numerous requirements which arise in fresh, strong, healthy young men, combined to arouse in them that spirit of enterprise which afterwards received further development in Zaporozhe. The hungry bursary[1] ran about the streets of Kiev, and forced every one to be on his guard. The huckstresses who sat in the bazaar always covered their patties, their greasy cracknels, and their squash-seeds[2] with their hands, like eagles protecting their young, if they but caught a glimpse of a passing student. The monitor who was bound by his official duty to control his comrades who were intrusted to his care, had such

[1] A student who receives a stipend for his support — a free student. Still called *bursar* in Scotland; at Cambridge University, *sizar;* at Oxford, *servitor.* I. F. H.

[2] Russians of the lower classes are extremely fond of chewing sunflower-seeds. Squash-seeds are more expensive,— and, so to speak,—more aristocratic. I. F. H.

frightfully wide pockets to his full trousers, that he could stow away the entire contents of a slothful huckstress's stall. These students constituted an entirely separate world by themselves: they were not admitted to the highest circles, composed of Polish and Russian nobles. Even the Voevod, Adam Kisel, in spite of the patronage he bestowed upon the academy, did not introduce them into society, and gave orders that they were to be ruled as strictly as possible. This command was entirely superfluous, for neither the Rector nor the monk-professors spared the rod or the whip; and the lictors sometimes, by their orders, whipped their monitors so severely that the latter rubbed their trousers for weeks afterwards. This was a mere nothing to many of them, and seemed only a little stronger than good vodka with pepper; others, at last, grew thoroughly tired of such constant thrashings, and ran away to Zaporozhe, if they could find the road, and if they were not caught on the way. Ostap Bulba, although he began to study logic and even theology with much zeal, did not escape the merciless rod. Naturally, all this was bound in some degree to embitter his character, and impart to it that firmness which distinguishes the kazáks. Ostap was always regarded as one of the best students.

He rarely led the others into audacious enter-

prises, such as robbing other people's gardens or orchards; but, on the other hand, he was always among the first to join the standard of an adventurous student, and never, under any circumstances whatsoever, did he betray his comrades; neither whips nor rods could make him do it. He bore himself sternly towards all temptations except those of war and wild carouses: at any rate, he almost never thought of anything else. He was frank with his equals. He was kind-hearted in the only way that kindness of heart could exist in such a character and at such an epoch. He was sincerely touched by his poor mother's tears; and this one thing only troubled him and caused him to hang his head thoughtfully.

His younger brother, Andríi, had rather livelier and more developed feelings. He studied more willingly, and without that effort with which strong, heavy characters generally apply themselves. He was more inventive than his brother, and frequently appeared as the leader of decidedly dangerous expeditions, and sometimes, thanks to the ingenious turn of his mind, he contrived to escape all punishment, while his brother Ostap, abandoning all concern, stripped off his coat, and lay down upon the floor without a thought of begging for mercy. He, also, was seething with the thirst for action; but, at the same time, his soul

was accessible to other sentiments. The demand for love flamed ardently within him; when he had attained his eighteenth year woman began to present herself more frequently in his burning dreams: while listening to philosophical discussions he beheld her each moment, rosy, black-eyed, tender; before him flitted constantly her gleaming, elastic bosom, her soft, beautiful bare arms; the very gown which clung about her virginal yet vigorous limbs exhaled, in his visions, a certain inexpressible sensuousness. He carefully concealed from his comrades this impulse of his passionate young soul, because, in that age, it was considered shameful and dishonourable for a kazák to think of love and a wife before he had tasted battle. On the whole, during the concluding years of his course, he served more rarely as the leader of a gang; but he roamed about more frequently alone in the remote corners of Kiev, buried in cherry-orchards, among low-roofed little houses, which peeped forth alluringly along the street. Sometimes he betook himself to the street of the aristocrats, in the old Kiev of to-day, where dwelt little Russian and Polish nobles, and where the houses were built in somewhat fanciful style. Once as he was thus lounging along, a huge, old-fashioned carriage, belonging to some Polish nobleman, almost drove over him; and the coach-

man, with very terrible moustaches, who sat on the box, gave him a decidedly sharp cut with his whip. The young student boiled with rage; with reckless daring, he seized a hind-wheel with his powerful hand, and brought the carriage to a halt. But the coachman, fearing a reckoning, lashed his horses; they leaped forward, and Andríi although, fortunately, he succeeded in freeing his hand, was flung full-length on the ground, with his face flat in the mud. The most resonant and melodious of laughs rang out from overhead. He raised his eyes and saw, standing at a window, a beauty such as he had never beheld before in all his life, black-eyed and white as the snow illumined by the dawning flush of the sun. She was laughing heartily, and her laughter lent sparkling force to her dazzling loveliness. He was taken aback; he gazed at her in utter confusion, abstractedly wiping the mud from his face, by which means it became still further smeared. Who could this beauty be? He tried to find out from the servants who, in rich liveries, stood beside the gate in a crowd, surrounding a young bandura player; but the servants raised a laugh when they saw his besmeared face, and deigned him no reply. At last he learned that she was the daughter of the Voevod of Kovno, who had come hither for a time. The following night, with the daring characteristic of the student alone,

he crept through the hedge into the garden, and climbed a tree which spread its branches over the very roof of the house. From the tree he crawled upon the roof, and made his way through the chimney straight into the bedroom of the beauty, who, at the moment, was seated before a candle, engaged in removing the costly earrings from her ears. The beautiful Pole was so alarmed on suddenly beholding a strange man before her, that she could not utter a single word; but when she perceived that the student stood before her with downcast eyes, not daring to move a hand through timidity, when she recognised in him the one who had fallen headlong in the street before her, laughter again overpowered her.

Moreover, there was nothing terrible in Andríi's features; he was very handsome. The beauty was giddy, like all Poles; but her eyes, her wondrous, clear, piercing eyes, darted a glance — a glance as long as constancy. The student could not move a hand, but stood bound as in a sack, when the Voevod's daughter approached him boldly, placed upon his head her glittering diadem, hung her earrings on his lips, and flung over him a transparent muslin chemise, with gold-embroidered garlands. She tricked him out, and played a thousand foolish pranks, with the unconstraint of a child, which distinguishes the giddy Poles, and

which threw the poor student into still greater agitation. He presented a ridiculous figure, as he stood staring fixedly, with wide-open mouth, into her dazzling eyes. At that moment, a knock at the door startled her. She ordered him to conceal himself under the bed, and, as soon as the disturbance was past, called her maid, a Tatár captive, and gave her orders to conduct him to the garden with caution, and thence send him away over the hedge. But this time our student did not pass the hedge so successfully. The watchman woke up, and caught him firmly by the leg; and the servants, assembling, beat him for a long time, even in the street, until his swift legs rescued him. After that it was very dangerous to pass the house, because the Voevod's servitors were numerous. He encountered her once more, in a Roman Catholic church. She saw him, and smiled very pleasantly, as at an old acquaintance. He saw her yet again, by chance; and shortly afterwards the Voevod of Kovno took his departure, and instead of the beautiful, black-eyed Pole, some fat face or other gazed from the window. That was what Andríi was thinking about when he hung his head, and dropped his eyes on his horse's mane.

In the meantime, the steppe had long since received them into its green embrace; and the tall grass, closing in around them, concealed them,

so that only their black kazák caps were visible among its spikes.

"Come, come, why are you so quiet, my lads?" said Bulba at last, waking from his own revery. "You're like monks. Come, send all thinking to the Devil on the spot! Take your pipes in your lips, and we'll smoke, and spur on our horses, and fly so swiftly that no bird can overtake us."

And the kazáks, bending low over their horses, disappeared in the grass. Their black caps were no longer visible; a wake of trodden grass alone showed a trace of their swift flight.

The sun had long since peered forth from the clear heavens and inundated the steppe with his vitalising, warming light. All that was dim and sleepy in the minds of the kazáks fled away in a twinkling; their hearts fluttered like birds. The further they penetrated into the steppe, the more beautiful did it become. At that time all the South, all that region which now constitutes New Russia, even to the Black Sea, was a green, virgin wilderness. No plough had ever passed over the immeasurable waves of wild growth; horses alone, hiding themselves in it as in a forest, trod it down. Nothing in Nature could be finer. The whole surface of the earth looked like a green-gold ocean, upon which were sprinkled millions of dif-

ferent flowers. Through the tall, slender stems of the grass peeped light-blue, dark-blue and lilac corn-flowers; the yellow broom thrust up its pyramidal head; the parasol-shaped white flowers of the yarrow dotted its surface. A wheat-ear, brought God knows whence, was filling out to ripening. About their slender roots ran partridges, with necks outstretched. The air was filled with the notes of a thousand different birds. In the sky, motionless, hung the hawks, with wings outspread, and eyes rivetted intently on the grass. The cries of a vast flock of wild ducks moving up on one side, were echoed from God knows what distant lake. From the grass a gull arose with measured sweep and bathed luxuriously in the blue waves of air; and now she has vanished on high, and appears only as a black dot! Now she has turned her wings, and shimmers in the sunlight. Devil take you, Steppe, how beautiful you are! . . .

Our travellers halted only a few minutes for dinner: their escort of ten kazáks sprang from their horses, unbound the wooden casks of brandy and the gourds which were used for drinking vessels. They ate only bread and lard, or dry wheaten cakes; they drank but one cup apiece, merely to strengthen them (for Taras Bulba never permitted intoxication on the road), and then continued their journey until evening.

In the evening the whole steppe completely changed its aspect. Its whole variegated expanse was bathed in the last bright glow of the sun; and it darkened gradually, so that the shadow could be seen as it flitted across it, and it became dark-green. The mist rose more densely; each flower, each blade of grass, emitted a fragrance as of amber, and an incense of perfume was wafted like smoke across the whole steppe. Wide streaks of rosy gold were flung athwart the dark-blue sky, as with a gigantic brush; here and there gleamed white tufts of light, and transparent clouds; and the coolest, most bewitching of little breezes barely rocked the tops of the grass-blades like sea waves, and only just caressed the cheek. All the music which had resounded throughout the day had died away, and given place to another. The striped marmots crept out of their holes, stood erect on their hind legs, and filled the steppe with their whistling. The whirr of the grasshoppers became more distinctly audible. Sometimes the cry of a swan was audible from some distant lake, and rang through the air like silver. The travellers halted in the middle of the plain, selected a spot for their night encampment, made a fire, hung over it a kettle in which they cooked their buckwheat groats; the steam rose and floated aslant in the air. Having supped, the

kazáks lay down to sleep, after hobbling their horses, and turning them out to graze. They lay down on their cloth coats. The nocturnal stars gazed directly down upon them. They heard the countless myriads of insects which filled the grass; all their rasping, whistling, and whirring resounded clearly through the night, purified by the cool air, and lulled the drowsy ear. If one of them rose and stood for a while, the steppe presented itself to him spangled with the sparks of glow-worms. At times the night sky was illumined in spots by the glare of dry reeds which were burning along pools or river-bank; and a dark file of swans flying northward, was suddenly lighted up by the silvery-rose hued gleam, and then it seemed as though crimson kerchiefs were floating across the dark heavens.

The travellers rode onward without any adventures. They came across no villages. There was nothing but the same boundless, undulating, wondrously beautiful steppe. At intervals the crests of forests loomed blue in the distance, on one hand, where they stretched along the banks of the Dnyeper. But once Taras pointed out to his sons a small black speck far away in the grass, saying, "Look, boys! yonder gallops a Tatár." The tiny moustached head fixed its eyes straight upon them, from the distance, sniffing the air like

a greyhound, then disappeared, like a stag, on perceiving that the kazáks were thirty strong. "And now, my lads, try to overtake the Tatár! But don't try: you would never catch him to all eternity; his horse is swifter than my Devil." Nevertheless, Bulba took precautions, fearing there might be hidden ambushes here or there. They galloped to a small stream called the Tatarka, which emptied into the Dnyeper, rode their horses into the water, and swam down it a long time to conceal their trail; and then, climbing out on the shore, they continued on their way.

Three days later they were not far from the place which formed the goal of their journey. The air grew suddenly colder: they could feel the vicinity of the Dnyeper. And yonder it gleamed afar off, distinguishable as a dark streak against the horizon. It exhaled waves of cold air, and spread nearer, nearer, and finally embraced half the entire surface of the earth. This was the part of the Dnyeper where the river, hitherto confined by the rapids, at last forced its way freely, and roared like the sea, pouring forth at will where the islands, flung into its midst, pressed it further from the shores, and its waves spread broadly over the earth, encountering neither cliffs nor hills. The kazáks alighted from their horses, entered the ferry-boat, and after a sail of three hours'

duration, arrived at the shore of the Island of Khortitza, where, at that time, was situated the Syech, which so often changed its location.

A throng of people on the shore were quarrelling with the ferrymen. The kazáks made ready their horses. Taras assumed a stately air, pulled his belt tighter, and drew his hand proudly over his moustache. His young sons also inspected themselves from head to foot, with some apprehension and an undefined feeling of satisfaction; then all set out together for the suburb, which was half a verst [1] from the Syech. On their arrival they were deafened by fifty blacksmiths' hammers beating upon twenty-five anvils sunk in the earth, and concealed with turf. Stalwart tanners sat on the street beneath their sloping roofs, scraping ox-hides with their strong hands; shopkeepers sat in their booths with piles of flints, steel and powder; an Armenian had hung out rich kerchiefs; a Tatár was turning mutton-collops on a spit; a Jew, with head thrust forward, was filtering corn-brandy from a cask. But the first man they met was a Zaporozhetz who was sleeping in the very middle of the road, with legs and arms outstretched. Taras Bulba could not refrain from halting to admire him.

"Eh, how splendidly developed he is! phew,

[1] A verst is two-thirds of a mile. I. F. H.

what a magnificent figure!" he said, reining in his horse. The Zaporozhetz had stretched himself out in the road like a lion; his scalp-lock, thrown proudly behind him, extended over half an arshín of ground;[1] his trousers, of costly scarlet cloth, were spotted with tar, to show his utter disdain for them. Having admired him to his heart's content, Bulba passed on through the narrow street, which was crowded with mechanics pursuing their trades, and with men of all nationalities, who thronged this suburb of the Syech, which resembled a fair, and fed and clothed Syech that knew only how to revel and to discharge guns.

At last they left the suburb behind them, and perceived some scattered kuréns[2] covered with turf, or with felt, in Tatár fashion. Some were furnished with cannon. Nowhere were any fences visible, or any of those low-roofed houses with sloping porch-roofs supported on short wooden pillars, such as there were in the suburb. A small rampart and abatis totally unguarded, showed a terrible degree of recklessness. Stalwart Zaporozhtzi lying, pipe in mouth, in the very road, glanced at them with great indifference, but did not stir from their places. Taras threaded

[1] An arshin is twenty-eight inches. I. F. H.

[2] Enormous wooden sheds or barracks, each inhabited by a troop or kurén. I. F. H.

his way carefully among them, with his sons, saying, " Good morning, noble sirs." " Good day to you," answered the Zaporozhtzi. Picturesque groups of men were scattered all over the plain. It was evident, from their weather-beaten faces, that all were steeled in battle, and had undergone every sort of reverse.

And there it was, the Syech! There was the nest from which all those men, strong and proud as lions, had issued forth! There was the place whence poured forth liberty and kazáks, all over the Ukraina.

The travellers emerged into the great square, where the Council generally assembled. On a huge overturned cask sat a Zaporozhetz without his shirt; he was holding it in his hands, and slowly sewing up the holes. Again their way was barred by a regular crowd of musicians, in the middle of whom a young Zaporozhetz was dancing, with head thrown back and arms outstretched. He kept shouting: "Play faster, musicians! Begrudge not brandy to these Orthodox Christians, Foma!" And Foma, with his blackened eye, went on measuring out, without stint, a huge jugful, to every one who presented himself.

About the youthful Zaporozhetz four old men were moving their feet quite briskly, leaping like a whirlwind to one side, almost upon the heads

of the musicians, then, suddenly retreating, they continued to dance in a squatting posture, and beat the hard-trodden earth rapidly and vigorously with their silver heels. The earth hummed dully all about the neighbourhood, and afar, through the air, resounded the hopák and the trepák, beaten out by the ringing heels of their boots.

But one shouted more vivaciously than all the rest, and flew after the others in the dance. His scalp-lock streamed in the wind, his powerful chest was all uncovered; his warm winter fur coat was hanging by the sleeves, and the perspiration poured from him like hail, as though from a bucket.

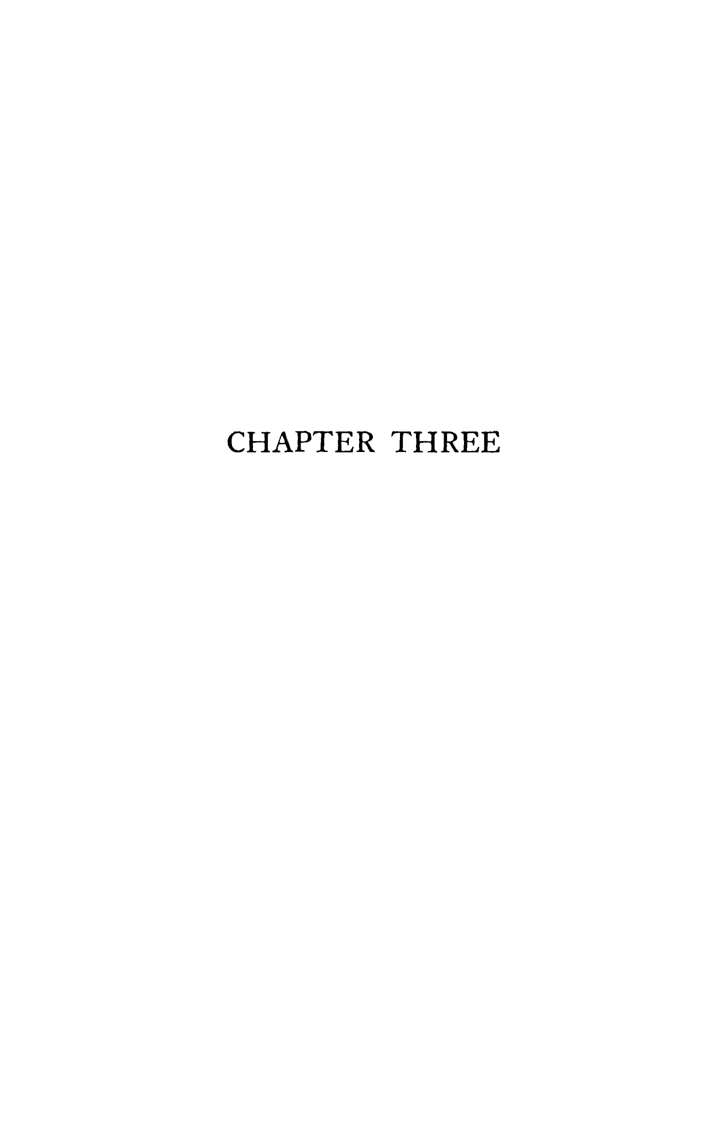
"Take off your jacket!" said Taras, at last: "Just see how he's steaming!"—"I can't!" shouted the kazák—"Why?"—"I can't: my character is such that whatever I take off I drink up"— and the young man had not had a cap for a long time past, nor a belt to his kaftan, nor an embroidered kerchief: all had travelled the fated road.

The throng increased: more men joined the dance; and it was impossible to observe without inward emotion, how it swept everything before it, that dance, the freest, the wildest the world has ever seen, which is called from its mighty originators, the Kazáchka.

"Eh, if it wasn't for my horse I'd strike out myself, that I would!" exclaimed Taras.

Meanwhile, there began to appear among the throng men who were respected for their prowess throughout the entire Syech,— old greyheads, who had been leaders more than once. Taras soon encountered a number of familiar faces. Ostap and Andríi heard nothing but greetings.— "Ah, so it's you, Pecheritza! — Good day, Kozolup! — Whence has God brought you, Taras? — How did you come here, Doloto? — Health to you, Kirdyaga! — Hail to you, Gustyi! — Who would ever have thought of seeing you, Remen?" And the heroes assembled from all the dissolute population of Eastern Russia, fell to kissing one another, and questions began to fly back and forth. —"But what has become of Kasyan? — Where is Borodavka? and Koloper? and Pidsytok?"— And, in reply, Taras learned that Borodavka had been hanged in Tolopan, that Koloper had been flayed alive near Kizikirmen, that Pidsytok's head had been salted down in a cask and sent to Tzargrad.[1] Old Bulba hung his head, and said thoughtfully, "They were good kazáks!"

[1] The sole Russian word for Constantinople, as Petrograd has always been the genuine Russian form for (St.) Petersburg. I. F. H.



CHAPTER THREE

III

TARAS BULBA and his sons had been in the Syech about a week. Ostap and Andríi occupied themselves very little with the school of war. The Syech was not fond of troubling itself with warlike exercises and wasting time. The young generation grew up, and learned these by experience alone, in the very heat of battles, which were, accordingly, almost incessant. The kazáks thought it a nuisance to fill up the intervals of this instruction with any sort of drill, except, perhaps, shooting at a target, and, on rare occasions, with horse-racing and wild-beast hunts on the steppe and in the forests. All the rest of the time they devoted to revelry,—a sign of the wide diffusion of spiritual liberty. The Syech, as a whole, presented an unusual phenomenon: it was a sort of unbroken revel; a ball noisily begun, which had lost its end. Some busied themselves with crafts, others kept little shops and traded; but the majority caroused from morning until night, if the wherewithal jingled in their pockets, and if the booty they had captured

had not passed into the hands of the shopkeepers and dram-shop keepers. There was a certain fascination about this universal revelry. It was not an assembly of topers, who drank to drown sorrow, but simply a wild revelry of joy. Every one who came thither forgot everything, abandoned everything which had hitherto interested him. He — so to speak — spat on all his past, and gave himself up recklessly to freedom and the good-fellowship of men of the same stamp as himself,— revellers, who had neither relatives nor home, nor family,— nothing save the free sky and the eternal feast of their souls. This gave rise to that wild gaiety which could not have come from any other source. The tales and chatter among the assembled crowd which reposed lazily on the ground were often so droll, and breathed forth such a power of vivid narration, that it required all the indifferent exterior cultivated by a Zaporozhetz to maintain his immovable expression of countenance, without so much as a twitch of the moustache,— a sharply-accentuated peculiarity which to this day distinguishes the Southern Russian from his brethren. It was drunken, noisy mirth; but withal it was no black ale-house, where a man forgets himself in darkly-seducing merriment: it was an intimate circle of schoolboys.

The only difference was, that, instead of sitting

under the pointer and threadbare doctrines of a teacher, they made a raid on five thousand horses; in place of the field where scholars played ball, they had the boundless, untrammelled border-marches; and at sight of them the Tatar showed his alert head, and the Turk, in his green turban, gazed phlegmatically, grimly. The difference was, that in place of the forced freedom which had united them at school, of their own free-will they had deserted their fathers and mothers and fled from their parental homes; that here were those about whose necks a rope was already dangling, and who, instead of pale death, had seen life, and life in all its intensity; that here were those who, from patrician habit, could never keep a kopék in their pockets; that here were those who had hitherto regarded a ducat as wealth, whose pockets, thanks to the Jew revenue-farmers, could have been turned wrong-side out without any danger of anything falling from them. Here all were students who could not endure the academic rod, and had not carried away a single letter from the school; but with them, also, were some who knew about Horace, and Cicero, and the Roman Republic. Many of them were officers who afterwards distinguished themselves in the King's armies; and there were numerous educated and experienced partisans, who cherished

a noble conviction that it was of no consequence where they fought so long as they did fight, because it was a disgrace to an honourable man to exist without fighting. Many there were who had come to the Syech for the sake of being able to say later on that they had been in the Syech, and were, therefore, steeled warriors. But who all was not there? This strange republic was an inevitable outgrowth of the epoch. Lovers of a warlike life, of golden beakers and rich brocades, of ducats and gold pieces, could always find employment there. The lovers of women alone could find nothing there, for no woman dared to show herself in the suburbs of the Syech.

It seemed exceedingly strange to Ostap and Andríi that, although a crowd of persons had come to the Syech with them, not a soul inquired, "Whence come these men? Who are they and what are their names?" They had come thither as though returning to their own home whence they had departed only an hour previously. A newcomer merely presented himself to the Koshevói, who generally said: "Welcome! Do you believe in Christ?"—"I do," replied the new arrival.—"And do you believe in the Holy Trinity?"—"I do."—"And do you go to church?"—"I do."—"Well, now, cross yourself." The newcomer crossed himself.—"Very good," said

the Koshevói.[1] "Enter whichever barrack you like." This comprised the entire ceremony. And the entire Syech prayed in one church, and were willing to defend it to the last drop of their blood, although they would not hear to fasting or abstinence. Only Jews, Armenians and Tatárs, inspired by strong greed, took the liberty of living and trading in the suburbs; for the Zaporozhtzi never cared to haggle, and paid whatever money their hand chanced to grasp in their pockets. Moreover, the lot of these gain-loving traders was pitiable in the extreme. They resembled people who had settled at the foot of Vesuvius; for when the Zaporozhtzi lacked money, the bold adventurers broke down their booths, and seized everything gratis. The Syech consisted of over sixty kuréns, which greatly resembled separate, independent republics, but still more a boys' school or a college, living care-free, with all their expenses paid. No one provided himself with anything; no one retained anything for himself. Everything was in the hands of the atamán of the barrack, who, on that account, generally went by the name of Bátko.[2] In his hands were deposited the money, clothes, all the provisions, dried oatmeal, buckwheat groats, even the firewood. They

[1] The chief over all the commanders. I. F. H.

[2] Father.

gave him the money to take care of. Quarrels in the barracks among their inhabitants, were not infrequent; in such cases, they proceeded at once to blows. The inmates of the barracks swarmed out upon the square, and smashed in one another's ribs with their fists until one side finally prevailed and gained the upper hand, when the revelry began. Such was the Syech, which had such an attraction for young men.

Ostap and Andríi flung themselves into this sea of dissipation with all the ardour of youth, and forgot, in a twinkling, their father's house, the seminary, and everything which had hitherto perturbed their souls, and gave themselves up to their new life. Everything interested them,— the jovial habits of the Syech, and the not very complicated laws, which even seemed to them too strict for such a free republic. If a kazák stole the smallest trifle, it was regarded as a disgrace to the whole kazák community: he was tied to a pillar of shame, and an oaken club was laid beside him, with which each passer-by was bound to deal him a blow, until, in this manner, he was beaten to death. He who did not pay his debts was chained to a cannon, where he was forced to sit until some one of his comrades decided to ransom him by paying his debts for him.

But what made the deepest impression upon

Andríi was the terrible punishment decreed for murder. A hole was dug in the murderer's presence, he was lowered into it, and over him was placed a coffin which enclosed the corpse of the man whom he had killed, after which earth was heaped upon both. Long afterwards the frightful ceremony of this horrible execution clung to his mind, and the man who had been buried alive appeared to him with his terrible coffin.

Both the young kazáks took a good standing among the kazáks. They frequently went out on the steppe with comrades from their barrack, and sometimes with the entire barrack, or with neighbouring barracks, to shoot the innumerable steppe-birds of every sort, and deer and goats; or they went out upon the lakes, the river and its tributaries, assigned by lot to each barrack, to cast their bag-nets and drag-nets, and draw out rich prey for the enjoyment of the whole kurén. Although a kazák was not tested there by any apprenticeship, yet they were soon remarked on among the other youths for their dogged bravery, and their skill in everything. Vigorously and accurately they fired at a target; they swam across the Dnyeper against the current,— a deed for which a novice was triumphantly received into the circle of kazáks.

But old Taras had planned a different sort of

activity for them. Such an idle existence was not to his mind: he wanted actual work. He meditated incessantly how he might stir up the Syech to some bold enterprise, wherein a man could carouse as became a knight. At last he went one day to the Koshevói and said plainly:

"Well, Koshevói, 'tis time for the Zaporozhtzi to make a little excursion."

"Nowhere to go," replied the Koshevói, removing his short pipe from his mouth, and spitting to one side.

"What d'ye mean by nowhere? We can make a raid on the Turks and the Tatárs."

"Impossible to raid either the Turks or the Tatárs," returned the Koshevói, putting his pipe coolly into his mouth again.

"Why is it impossible?"

"Because it is. We've promised the Sultan peace."

"But he's a Mussulman; and God and the Holy Scriptures command us to slay the Mussulmans."

"We have no right. If we had not sworn by our holy Faith then, perhaps, it might be done; but now 'tis impossible."

"How is it impossible? How can you say that we have no right? Here are my two sons, both young men grown. Neither one has been to war; and you say that we have no right, and

you say that there is no necessity for the Zaporozhtzi to set out on an expedition."

"Well, 'tis not fitting."

"Then it must be fitting that kazák strength should be wasted in vain, that a man should disappear like a dog without having done a single good deed, without having been of any use to his country or to Christianity! Then why do we live? What the devil do we live for? Just tell me that. You're a sensible man, you were not elected as Koshevói without reason: just explain to me what we live for?"

To this question the Koshevói made no reply. He was a headstrong kazák. He remained silent for a while, then said: "Anyway, there shall be no war."

"There shall be no war?" Taras repeated.

"No."

"Then there's no use in thinking about it?"

"No; no use."

"Just wait, you damned pigheaded brute!" said Taras to himself: "I'll teach you to know me!" and he immediately resolved to revenge himself on the Koshevói.

Having entered into an agreement with one man here, another man there, he gave a drinking-bout for everybody; and several of the kazáks, in a state of intoxication, staggered straight to the

square where on a post hung the kettle-drums which were generally beaten to summon the Council; not finding the sticks, which were always kept by the drummer, they seized a billet of wood, and began to thump. The first to respond to the drum-beat was the drummer, a tall man with but one eye, and a frightfully sleepy eye, at that.

"Who dares to beat the drum?" he shouted.

"Hold your tongue! Take your sticks, and beat when you're ordered!" replied the drunken men.

The drummer immediately took from his pocket the sticks which he had brought with him, being very well aware what would be the result of such proceedings. The drums began to thunder, and ere long black bunches of kazáks began to collect, like swarms of bees, in the square. All formed in a ring; and, at last, after the third summons, the chiefs began to arrive,—the Koshevói with his mace, the symbol of his office, in his hand; the Judge, with the seal of the Army; the Scribe, with his inkhorn; and the Yesaúl with his staff. The Koshevói and the chiefs doffed their caps, and bowed on all sides to the kazáks, who stood proudly, with their arms akimbo.

"What means this assemblage? What is your wish, noble sirs?" said the Koshevói. Shouts and abuse interrupted his speech.

" Give up your mace! Give up your mace this moment, you son of the Devil! We'll have no more of you!" shouted kazáks in the crowd. Some of the sober ones appeared to wish to oppose this, but the barracks, sober and drunken, fell to blows. The shouting and uproar became general. The Koshevói made an attempt to speak; but knowing that the headstrong multitude, if enraged, might beat him to death, as almost always happened in such cases, he bowed very low, laid down his mace, and hid himself in the crowd.

" Do you command us, noble sirs, to resign our insignia of office?" said the Judge, the Scribe and the Yesaúl; and they prepared to give up the inkhorn, the seal of the Army and the staff, on the spot.

" No, remain!" was shouted from the crowd. " We only want to drive out the Koshevói because he's a woman, and we want a man for Koshevói."

" Whom do you elect as Koshevói?" asked the chiefs.

" Elect Kukubenko," shouted some.

" We won't have Kukubenko!" yelled another party: " he's too young; the milk isn't dry on his lips yet."

" Let Shilo be atamán!" shouted some: " make Shilo the Koshevói."

" None of your Shilo!" yelled the crowd; " a

nice sort of kazák he is! that son of a dog is as thievish as a Tatár! To the devil in a sack with your drunken Shilo!"

"Borodaty! let's make Borodaty Koshevói!"

"We won't have Borodaty! To the devil's mother with Borodaty!"

"Shout Kirdyaga," whispered Taras Bulba to several.

"Kirdyaga, Kirdyaga!" shouted the crowd.

"Borodaty! Borodaty! Kirdyaga! Kirdyaga! Shilo! Away with Shilo! Kirdyaga!"

All the candidates, the moment they heard their names mentioned, stepped out of the crowd, in order not to give any one a chance to suppose that they were taking a part personally in their election.

"Kirdyaga, Kirdyaga!" rang out more strongly than the rest.

"Borodaty!"

They proceeded to decide the matter by a show of fists, and Kirdyaga won.

"Go for Kirdyaga!" they shouted. Half a score of kazáks immediately stepped out from the crowd,— some of them could hardly keep their feet, so intoxicated were they,— and went directly to Kirdyaga to notify him of his election.

Kirdyaga, although very old, was a very shrewd kazák, and had been sitting in his barrack

for a good while already, as though he knew nothing about what was going on.

" What is it, noble sirs? [1] What is your will?" he inquired.

" Come, you are elected Koshevói."

" Have mercy, noble sirs!" said Kirdyaga. " How am I worthy of such an honour? Why should I be made Koshevói? I haven't sufficient sense to discharge such a duty. Could no better man be found in all the Army?"

" Come along, as you're bid!" shouted the Zaporozhtzi. Two of them seized him by the arms; and, although he planted his feet firmly, they finally dragged him to the square, accompanied by shouts, thrusts from the rear with fists, kicks and exhortations.—" Don't hold back, you son of the Devil! Accept the honour, you dog, when 'tis given to you!" In this manner was Kirdyaga conducted into the ring of kazáks.

" Well, noble sirs," yelled those who had brought him, " are you agreed that this kazák shall be your Koshevói?"

" All agreed!" shouted the throng, and the whole plain reverberated for a long time afterward with that shout.

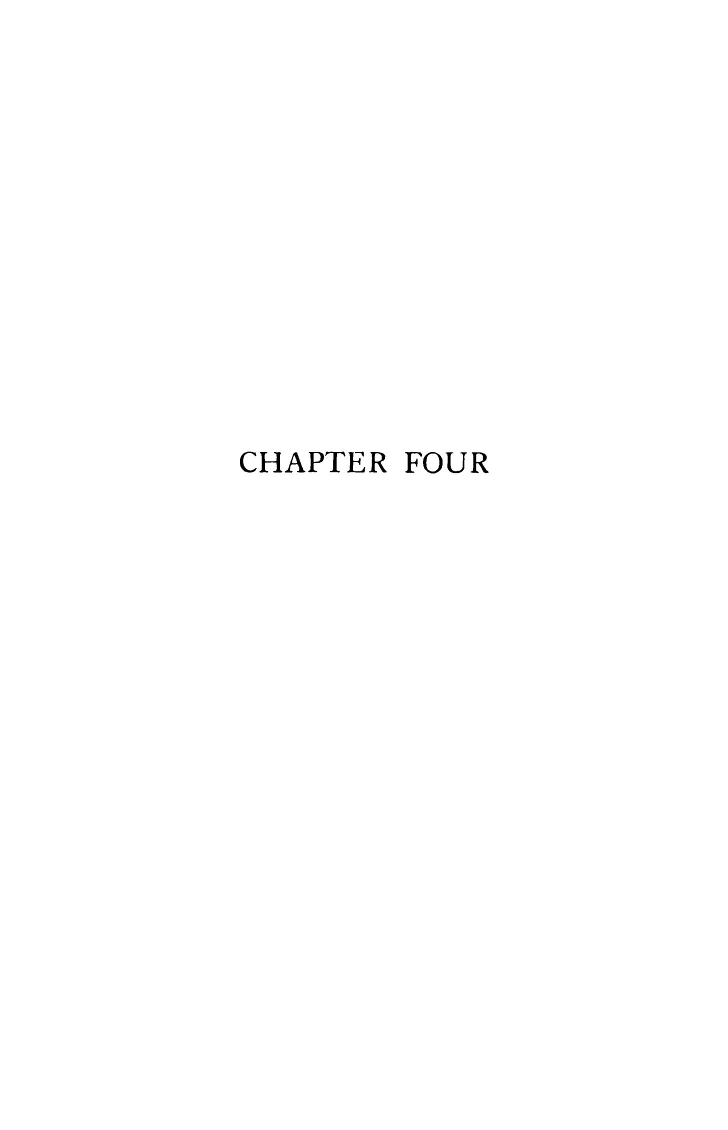
[1] The Polish "Panove," the word employed here and elsewhere, is the form of address for men of noble birth, "Pan" (or *Mr.*) being the singular form. I. F. H.

One of the chiefs took the mace and handed it to the newly-elected Koshevói. Kirdyaga, in accordance with custom, immediately refused it. The chief offered it a second time; Kirdyaga again declined it, and then, at the third offer, accepted it. A shout of approbation rang through the crowd, and again the whole plain resounded afar with the shout of the kazáks. Then there stepped forth from among the people, the four oldest of all, white moustached kazáks with white scalp-locks (there were no very old men in the Syech, for none of the Zaporozhtzi ever died a natural death), and taking each a handful of earth, which recent rains had converted into mud, they laid it on his head. The wet earth trickled down from his head, ran on his moustache and cheeks, and smeared his whole face with mud. But Kirdyaga stood motionless in his place, and thanked the kazáks for the honour they had shown him.

Thus ended the noisy election, as to which one cannot say whether it was as pleasing to the others as it was to Bulba: by means of it he had taken his revenge on the former Koshevói. Moreover, Kirdyaga was an old comrade of his, and had been on expeditions with him by land and sea, sharing the toils and hardships of war. The crowd immediately dispersed to celebrate the election, and such revelry ensued as Ostap and

Andríi had not yet beheld. The dram-shops were attacked: mead, corn-brandy and beer were seized quite simply, without payment; the owners were glad enough to escape with whole skins themselves. The whole night passed amid shouts, and songs which celebrated war-like feats — and the rising moon gazed long at troops of musicians marching about the streets with banduras, round balaláikas[1] and the church choir, who were kept to sing in church and to glorify the deeds of the Zaporozhtzi. At last drunkenness and fatigue began to overpower their strong heads, and here and there a kazák could be seen to fall upon the earth, and, comrade embracing comrade in fraternal fashion, maudlin and even weeping, both rolled upon the earth together. Here a whole group tumbled down in a heap; there a man chose the most comfortable position, and stretched straight out on a log of wood. This last, who was stronger, was still giving utterance to incoherent speeches; at last even he yielded to the power of intoxication, flung himself down — and all in the Syech slept.

[1] The ordinary balaláika is triangular. I. F. H.



CHAPTER FOUR

IV.

BUT on the following day, Taras Bulba had a conference with the new Koshevói as to the best way of inciting the kazáks to some enterprise. The Koshevói was a wily and sagacious kazák, knew the Zaporozhtzi through and through, and said, at first: "Oaths cannot be violated; it's downright impossible." But, after a pause, he added: "No matter, it can be managed. We won't violate them, but let's devise something. Let the men assemble, not at my summons, but simply of their own accord. You know how to contrive it; and I'll hasten to the square instantly, with the chiefs, as though we knew nothing about it."

Not an hour had elapsed after their conversation when the kettle-drums thundered. Instantly the drunken and foolish kazáks made their appearance. A million kazák caps poured into the square. A murmur arose, "Why? What? Why was the assembly beaten?" No one answered. At last, in one quarter and another, it began to be rumoured about, "Behold, the kazák

strength is being vainly wasted: there is no war! Behold, our leaders have become altogether fat and sleepy; their eyes swim in fat! Yes, plainly, there is no justice in the world!" The other kazáks first listened, and then began to say to themselves, "Ah, that's the truth; there's no justice in the world!" Their leaders seemed surprised at these utterances. At last the Koshevói stepped forward: "Permit me, noble kazáks, to address you."

"Speak out!"

"Touching the matter in question, noble sirs, probably no one knows better than yourselves, that many Zaporozhtzi have run in debt to the Jews in the dram-shops, and to that sort of folks, so that now not even a devil would give them credit. Again, touching the matter in question, there are many young fellows who have no idea of what war is like, although, as you are aware, noble sirs, without war a young man cannot exist. How make a Zaporozhetz out of him if he has never slain a Mussulman?"

"He speaks well," said Bulba to himself.

"Think not, however, noble sirs, that I speak thus with a view of disturbing the peace: God forbid! I merely mention the fact. Moreover, the church we have for our God is too disgraceful for words: just consider for how many years the

Syech has existed, by the mercy of God, but to this day it not only doesn't look like a church outside, but even the holy pictures have no adornments; no one has so much as thought of making them a garment:[1] they have received only that which some other kazáks have bequeathed them in their wills; and moreover those gifts have been meagre, because those men had drunk up nearly all they had during their lifetime. I'm making you this speech, therefore, not with the object of stirring you up to a war with the Mussulmans: we have promised the Sultan peace, and it would be a great sin in us, for we swore it according to our law."

"What's he mixing things up like that for?" said Bulba to himself.

"So you see, noble sirs, that war cannot be begun; knightly honour does not permit it. But according to my poor opinion, this is what I think: let's send out a few young men in boats; let them ravage the coasts of Anatolia a bit. What say you, noble sirs?"

"Lead on, take us all!" shouted the crowd on all sides. "We're ready to lay down our heads for our Faith."

[1] The golden or silver decoration, applied to the painted holy pictures, in the form of a garment which leaves the face, hands and feet of the Saint visible. It is a great favor — as well as a sign of zeal — to be permitted to furnish such decoration for the Holy Ikona. I. F. H.

The Koshevói was alarmed. He did not wish, by any manner of means, to stir up all Zaporozhe; a breach of the peace appeared to him improper on the present occasion. "Permit me, noble sirs, to address you further."

"Enough!" yelled the kazáks. "You can say nothing better."

"If so it must be, then so be it. I am the slave of your will. Everybody knows, and the Scriptures also tell us, that the voice of the people is the voice of God. It is impossible to devise anything better than the whole nation has devised. But here's the difficulty: you know, noble sirs, that the Sultan will not permit the diversion which delights our young men to go unpunished. And we ought to be well prepared at such a time, and our forces ought to be fresh, and then we need fear no one. But during their absence the Tatárs may make an attack; those Turkish dogs don't show themselves, and they daren't come while the master is at home, but they snap at his heels from behind, and bite painfully, to boot. And, if it comes to that, to speak the truth, we have not boats enough on hand, nor powder ready in sufficient quantity, for all to go. But I am glad and ready, if you like: I am the slave of your will."

The wily Atamán stopped speaking. The

various groups began to discuss the matter, and the atamáns of the different barracks to take counsel together: fortunately, few of these were drunk, so they decided to heed the counsels of reason.

A number of men set out at once for the opposite shore of the Dnyeper, to the treasury of the Army, where, in an inaccessible hiding-place, under water and among the reeds, lay concealed the army-chest, and a part of the arms captured from the enemy. Others hastened to inspect the boats, and prepare them for service. In a twinkling the whole shore was thronged with men. Carpenters appeared, axes in hand. Old, weatherbeaten, broad-shouldered, strong-legged Zaporozhtzi, with black or silvered moustaches, rolled up their trousers, stood knee-deep in the water, and dragged the boats from the shore with stout ropes; others brought thither seasoned lumber, ready for immediate use, and timber of all sorts. Here the boats were freshly planked, turned bottom upwards, calked and tarred; there other skiffs were bound together, side by side, in kazák fashion, with long strands of reeds, that the swell of the waves on the sea might not sink them. Further on, all along the shores, they built fires, and heated tar in copper kettles, to coat the boats. The old and experienced instructed the young. The blows

and shouts of the workers rose over all the countryside; the bank, alive with men, shook and swayed about.

About this time a large ferry-boat began to approach the shore. The mass of men standing in it began to wave their arms from a long distance away. They were kazáks in torn, ragged svitkas. Their disordered garments (many had nothing but their shirt and a short pipe in their mouth) showed that they had escaped from some disaster, or had caroused to such an extent that they had drunk up all they had had on their bodies. A very short, broad-shouldered kazák of about fifty stepped out from their midst, and stood in front. He shouted and waved his hand more vigorously than any of the others; but his words could not be heard for the shouts and hammering of the workmen.

"Whence come you?" asked the Koshevói, when the boat had touched shore. All the workers paused in their labours, and, with axes and chisels uplifted, looked on expectantly.

"From a misfortune!" shouted the kazák.

"From what?"

"Permit me, noble Zaporozhtzi, to address you."

"Speak!"

"Or would you prefer to assemble the Council?"

"Speak, we are all here."

The men all pressed together in a close mass.

"And have you heard nothing of what has been going on in the Hetman's dominions?"

"What is it?" inquired one of the barrack atamáns.

"Eh! What? Evidently, a Tatár has plastered up your ears, that you might hear nothing."

"Tell us: what is going on there?"

"That is going on the like of which no man born or christened ever yet has seen."

"Tell us what it is, you son of a dog," shouted one of the crowd, apparently losing patience.

"Things have come to such a pass that our holy churches are no longer ours."

"How not ours?"

"They are leased to the Jews now. If the Jew is not first paid, there can be no service."

"What nonsense is this you're telling us?"

"And if the thrice-accursed dog of a Jew does not make a sign with his unclean hand over the holy paskha,[1] it cannot be blessed."

"He lies, brother nobles! It cannot be that an unclean Jew puts his mark upon the holy paskha."

"Listen! I have not yet told all. Roman Catholic priests are driving about all over the Ukraina, in carts. The harm lies not in the carts,

[1] The special Easter dish, made chiefly of curds. I. F. H.

but that not horses but Orthodox[1] Christians are harnessed to them. Listen! Even that is not all. They say that the Jewesses are making themselves petticoats out of our priests' vestments. Such are the deeds that are taking place in the Ukraina, noble sirs! And you sit here revelling in Zaporozhe; and, evidently, a Tatár has so scared you that you have no eyes, no ears, no anything, and you hear nothing that is going on in the world."

"Stop, stop!" broke in the Koshevói, who, up to that moment had stood with his eyes fixed upon the earth like all Zaporozhtzi who, on important occasions never yielded to their first impulse but kept silence, and meanwhile collected privately all the menacing power of their indignation. "Stop! I, also, have a word to say. What have you been doing the while? When the Devil was thus mauling your priest,—what were you doing yourselves? Had you no swords? How did you come to permit such lawlessness?"

"Eh! How did we come to permit such lawlessness? You ought to have tried to stop it, when there were fifty thousand of the Lyakhs[2] alone; yet, and 'tis a shame not to be concealed,

[1] The "Orthodox," or "Orthodox Christians," signifies members of the Greco-Russian, or Eastern Catholic, Church. I. F. H.

[2] *Lyak* is an abbreviated form of *Polyakh,* Pole. I. F. H.

that there were also dogs among our men who have already accepted their Faith."

"But your Hetman and your colonels,— what did they do?"

"God preserve any one from such deeds as our colonels performed!"

"How so?"

"This way: Our Hetman, roasted in a brazen ox, now lies in Warsaw; and the heads and hands of our colonels are being carried round to all the Fairs, as a spectacle for the people. That's what our colonels did."

The whole throng became violently agitated. At first silence reigned all along the shore, like that which precedes a fierce tempest; and then, suddenly, voices were raised, and all the shore broke into utterance:

"What! Jews hold the Christian churches on lease! Roman-Catholic priests have harnessed and beaten Orthodox Christians! What! Such torture has been permitted on Russian soil by accursed unbelievers! And they have done such things to the colonels and the Hetman? Nay, this shall not be, it shall not be!" Words of this sort flew from all quarters. The Zaporozhtzi were in an uproar, and felt their power. This was not the excitement of a giddy-headed folk. All who were

thus agitated were strong, firm characters, which were not easily heated, but once rendered red-hot preserved the inward heat long and obstinately. "Hang all Jews!" rang through the crowd. "They shall not make petticoats for their Jewesses from priests' vestments! They shall not place their tokens on the holy paskha! Drown them all, the heathens, in the Dnyeper!" These words, uttered by some one in the throng, flashed like lightning through all minds, and the crowd flung themselves upon the suburb with the intention of cutting the throats of all the Jews.

The poor sons of Israel, losing all presence of mind, and not being courageous, in any case, hid themselves in empty brandy-casks, in ovens, and even crawled under the skirts of their Jewesses; but the kazáks routed them out, wherever they were.

"Most illustrious lords!" shrieked one Jew, tall and thin as a stick, thrusting his sorry visage, distorted with terror, from among a group of his comrades, "most illustrious lords! suffer us to say a word, only one word. We will reveal to you what you never yet have heard, a thing more important than I can say,— very important!"

"Well, say it!" said Bulba, who always liked to hear what an accused man had to say.

"Illustrious lords!" exclaimed the Jew, "such

lords never were seen before, never, by God! Such good, kind, brave men there never were in the world before!" His voice died away, quivering with terror. "How was it possible that we should think any evil of the Zaporozhtzi? Those men are not of us at all, those who take leases in the Ukraina. God is my witness — they are not of us! They are not Jews at all. The Devil only knows what they are; they are only fit to spit upon, and cast aside. Behold, they will tell you the same thing! Is it not true, Shloma? or you, Shmul?"

"By God, it is true!" replied Shloma and Shmul, from among the crowd, both pale as clay under their ragged caps.

"We never yet," pursued the long Jew, "have had any secret intercourse with your enemies, and with Roman Catholics we will have nothing to do; may they dream of the Devil! We are like blood brothers to the Zaporozhtzi. . . ."

"What! Do you mean to say that the Zaporozhtzi are brothers to you!" exclaimed one among the throng. "Don't wait; accursed Jews! Into the Dnyeper with them, noble sirs! Drown all unbelievers!"

These words served as the signal. They seized the Jews by the arms, and began to hurl them into the waves. Piteous cries resounded on all sides;

but the grim Zaporozhtzi only laughed, when they saw the Jewish legs, encased in shoes and stockings flourishing in the air. The poor orator who had called down destruction on himself, wriggled out of his kaftan, by which they had seized him, and in his scant, parti-coloured under-waistcoat, clasped Bulba's legs and begged, in a piteous voice: " Great lord! most gracious sir! I used to know your brother, the late Dorosha. He was a warrior who was an ornament to knighthood. I gave him eight hundred sequins when he was forced to ransom himself from the Turks."

" You knew my brother? " asked Taras

" God is my witness that I did. He was a magnificent nobleman."

" And what is your name? "

" Yankel."

" Good," said Taras; and then, after reflecting, he turned to the kazáks and spoke as follows: " There will always be plenty of time to hang the Jew, if it proves necessary; but give him to me for to-day."

So saying, Taras led him to his wagon, beside which stood his kazáks. " Now, crawl under the cart; lie there, and don't move.— And as for you, my good men, don't you surrender the Jew."

Thereupon he returned to the square, for the whole crowd had, long before, collected there.

All had, at once, abandoned the shore and the preparation of the boats; for a land-journey now lay before them, not a sea-voyage, and they needed horses and carts, not ships and kazák gulls. Now all, both young and old, wanted to go on the expedition; and it was decided, with the advice of the chiefs, the atamáns of the barracks, the Koshevói, and the will of the whole Zaporozhian army, to march straight to Poland, to avenge all the injury and disgrace to the Faith and to kazák renown, to seize booty from the cities, to start conflagrations in the villages and crops, and to spread their fame far abroad over the steppe. All immediately girded and armed themselves. The Koshevói grew two feet — and more — taller. He was no longer the timid executor of the frivolous wishes of a free people; he was the untrammelled master, he was a despot who understood only how to command. All the headstrong and uproarious knights stood in orderly ranks, with respectfully bowed heads, not venturing to lift their eyes when the Koshevói issued his orders; he gave them quietly, without shouting, without haste, but with pauses, like an old man deeply learned in kazák affairs, and putting into execution, not for the first time, a wisely-matured enterprise.

"Examine yourselves,— inspect yourselves

thoroughly, all of you," he said, "put your teams and your tar-boxes in order, test your weapons. Take not many garments with you: a shirt and a couple of pairs of trousers to each kazák, and a pot of dried oatmeal and ground millet apiece,—let no one take any more! There will be plenty of provisions, all that's needed, in the wagons. Let every kazák have two horses. And two hundred yoke of oxen must be taken, for we shall require them at the fords and marshy places. Maintain order, noble sirs, above all things. I know that there are some among you who, as soon as God sends greed, will immediately tear up nankin and rich velvets to make themselves foot-wrappers. Leave off such devilish habits; spurn every petticoat, and take only weapons, if you happen to come across good ones, and ducats or silver, noble sirs, for they are subject to capture, and useful in any case. And I'll tell you this beforehand, noble sirs: if any one gets drunk on this expedition, he will receive short shrift: I'll order him to be chained by the neck like a dog, to a transport, no matter who he may be, even were he the most heroic kazák in the whole army; he shall be shot on the spot like a dog, and flung out to be torn by the birds of prey, without burial, for a drunkard on the march deserves not Christian burial. Young men, obey the old men in all things! If a

ball grazes you, or a sword cuts your head or any other part, pay no heed to such trifles. Mix a charge of powder in a cup of brandy, quaff heartily of it, and all will pass off — you will not even have any fever; and if the wound is not too large, put simple earth on it, mixing it first with spittle in your palm, and it will dry up the wound. And now, to work, to work, my lads; get into action, but without over-haste."

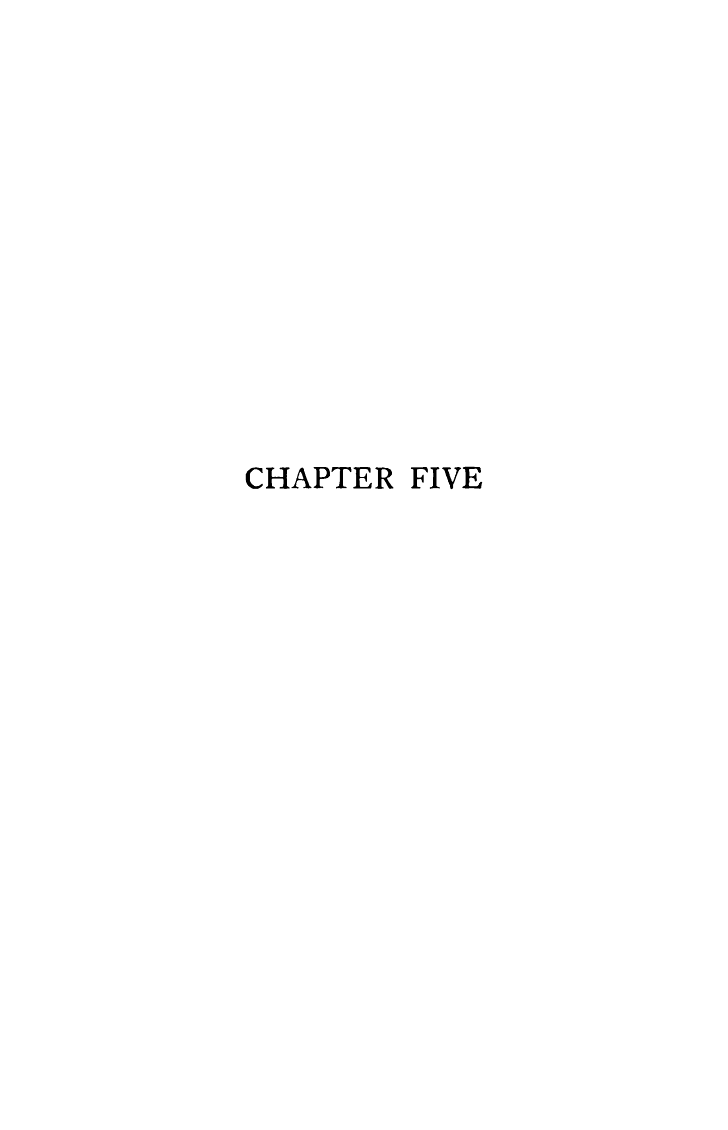
So spoke the Koshevói; and no sooner had he finished his speech than all the kazáks instantly set to work. All the Syech sobered up, and there was not a single drunken man to be found, any more than if there never had been such a thing among the kazáks. Some kazáks repaired the fellies of the wheels, others shifted the axles of the carts; some carried sacks of provisions to the transport wagons, while other wagons they loaded with arms; others, still, drove up the horses and oxen. On all sides resounded the trampling of horses' hoofs, test-shots from the guns, the clang of swords, the lowing of oxen, the screech of turning wagons, talking, shrill cries, and urging on of cattle; — and soon the kazák camp stretched far over the plain. And he who might have undertaken to run from its head to its tail would have had a long course. In the tiny wooden church the priest held a special service of prayer, and

sprinkled every one with holy water; all kissed the cross. When the horde started and moved out of the Syech all the Zaporozhtzi turned their heads for a last look: "Farewell, our mother!" they said, almost in one breath. "May God preserve thee from all misfortune!"

As he passed through the suburb, Taras Bulba saw that his Jew, Yankel, had already erected a sort of stall with an awning, and was selling flints, screw-drivers, powder, and all sorts of military stores needed on the road, even rolls and loaves of bread. "What devils those Jews are!" said Taras to himself; and riding up to him, he said: "Fool, why are you sitting here? do you want to be shot like a sparrow?"

Yankel, in reply, came as near to him as possible, and making signs with both hands, as though desirous of imparting some secret, said: "Let the noble lord but keep silence, and say nothing to any one. Among the kazák wagons is a cart of mine; I am carrying all sorts of needful stores for the kazáks, and on the journey I will furnish every sort of provision at a lower price than any Jew ever sold before. 'Tis so, God is my witness — God is my witness, 'tis so!"

Taras Bulba shrugged his shoulders in amazement at the Jewish nature, and rode on to the horde.



CHAPTER FIVE

V

ALL Southwest Poland speedily became a prey to fear. Everywhere the rumour flew: "The Zaporozhtzi! The Zaporozhtzi have appeared!" All who could flee, did so. All rose up and scattered, after the manner of that lawless, reckless age, when men built neither fortresses nor castles, but each erected his temporary dwelling of straw at haphazard. Each man thought: "'Tis useless to waste money and labour on a cottage; 'twill be swept away, in any case, in a Tatár raid." Every one took fright; one exchanged his plough and oxen for a horse and gun; another hid, driving off his cattle, and carrying away all he could. Occasionally, on the road, some were encountered who greeted their visitors with arms in hand; but more numerous were those who fled before their arrival. Every one knew that it was difficult to deal with the wild and warlike horde known by the name of the Zaporozhian army, which, beneath its reckless and disorderly exterior, concealed an organisation well calculated for times of battle. The horsemen

rode on without overburdening or heating their horses; the foot-soldiers marched soberly behind the wagons; and the whole camp moved only by night, resting during the day, and selecting for this purpose the wilderness, uninhabited places, and the forests, of which there was then an abundance. Spies and scouts were sent ahead to ferret out the where, the what, and the how. And often they made their appearance suddenly in the places where they were least expected — and then every one bade farewell to life; the villages were burned; the horses and cattle which were not driven off behind the army, were killed on the spot. They seemed to be revelling, rather than carrying out a raid. Our hair would rise on end nowadays, at the horrible exhibitions of savagery of that fierce, half-civilised age, which the Zaporozhtzi everywhere displayed. Children slain, women's breasts cut off, the skin flayed from the feet up to the knees of victims who were then set at liberty: in a word, the kazáks paid old debts in coin of full weight. The Prelate of one monastery, on hearing of their approach, despatched two monks to say that they were not behaving as they should; that an agreement existed between the Zaporozhtzi and the Government; that they were breaking faith with the King, and all international right. "Tell your Bishop, from me and from all the

Zaporozhtzi," said the Koshevói, "that he has nothing to fear; the kazáks, so far, are only lighting and smoking their pipes." And the magnificent abbey was soon wrapped in the devouring flames, and its colossal Gothic windows gazed grimly through the waves of fire as they parted. Fleeing throngs of monks, women and Jews suddenly flooded those towns where there was any hope in the garrison and the town-defences. The belated succour, despatched from time to time by the Government, consisting of a few small regiments, either could not find them, or, seized with fright, turned tail at the very first encounter, and fled on their swift horses. So it came to pass that many of the royal commanders, who had conquered in former battles, resolved to unite their forces, and present a front to the Zaporozhtzi

And here, more than all, did our young kazáks, who avoided robbery, cupidity and a weak enemy, and were burning with the desire to distinguish themselves in the presence of the chiefs, endeavour to measure themselves in single combat with a warlike and boastful Lyakh, prancing on his spirited horse, with the sleeves of his jacket thrown back and streaming in the wind. This science was inspiriting; they had already won for themselves many horse-trappings, valuable swords, and guns. In a single month, the newly-fledged birds had

attained their full growth, were completely transformed, and had become men; their features, in which, hitherto a trace of youthful softness had been discernible, had now grown grim. And it was pleasant to old Taras, to see both his sons among the leaders. It seemed as though Ostap were designed by nature for the pursuit of war and the difficult art of conducting military operations. Never once losing his head, or becoming confused under any circumstances, with a cool audacity which was almost supernatural in a youth of two and twenty, he could, in an instant, gauge the danger, and grasp the whole scope of the matter, could instantly devise a means of escaping it, but of escaping it only that he might the more surely conquer it. His movements now began to be distinguished by the assurance which springs from experience, and in them could be detected the temperament of the future great leader. His person exhaled strength, and his knightly qualities had already assumed the broad power of the lion. " Oh, what a fine colonel that fellow will make one of these days! " said old Taras. " By God, he'll make a magnificent colonel, far surpassing even his father! "

Andríi surrendered himself wholly to the enchanting music of bullets and swords. He knew not what it was to consider or to calculate, or to

measure in advance his own strength and the enemy's. He found in battle a mad delight and intoxication; he perceived something festal in the moments when a man's brain burns, when everything waves and flutters before his eyes, heads fly off, horses fall to the earth with a sound of thunder, while he rides on like a drunken man, amid the whistling of bullets and the flashing of swords, dealing blows to all, and heeding not those dealt to him. More than once the father marvelled, also, at Andríi, when he beheld him, incited only by a passionate impulse, hurl himself at something which a sensible man in cold blood would never have attempted, and, by the sheer force of his mad onslaught accomplish such wonders as could not but amaze men old in battle. Old Taras admired, and said: "And he, too, will be a good warrior (if the enemy does not capture him). He's not Ostap, but he's a fine, a grand warrior, nevertheless."

The army decided to march straight to the city of Dubno, where, so rumour asserted, there were many treasures and wealthy inhabitants. The journey was accomplished in a day and a half, and the Zaporozhtzi made their appearance before the city. The inhabitants resolved to defend themselves to the utmost extent of their power, to the last extremity, and preferred to die in their

squares and streets, before their own thresholds, rather than admit the enemy to their houses. A high earthen rampart surrounded the city; in places where the rampart was somewhat lower there rose up a stone wall, or a house, or even an oaken stockade, which served as a battery. The garrison was strong, and felt the importance of their business. The Zaporozhtzi attacked the rampart fiercely, but were met by a shower of grapeshot. The citizens and residents of the town evidently did not wish to remain idle, either, and stood in groups upon the rampart; in their eyes could be read desperate resistance. The women, also, were determined to take part, and rained down upon the heads of the Zaporozhtzi stones, casks, pots, and, finally, boiling water and sacks of sand, which blinded them. The Zaporozhtzi were not fond of dealing with fortified places: sieges were not in their line. The Koshevói ordered a retreat, and said: "'Tis useless, brother nobles; we will retire: but may I be a heathen Tatár and not a Christian, if we don't clean them out of that town! Let them all perish of hunger, the dogs!" The army retreated, invested the town on all sides, and, for lack of something to do, busied themselves with devastating the surrounding country, burning the neighbouring villages, the ricks of unthreshed grain, and turning

their droves of horses loose in the fields as yet untouched by the reaping-hook, where, as though intentionally prepared for them, waved the plump ears, the fruit of an unusual harvest, liberally rewarding all tillers of the soil that season.

With horror, the inhabitants, looking on from the city, beheld their means of subsistence destroyed. And, meanwhile, the Zaporozhtzi, having formed a double cordon of their wagons around the city, disposed themselves as in the Syech in their barracks, smoked their pipes, bartered their booty for weapons, played at leap-frog, at odd-and-even, and gazed at the city with deadly cold-bloodedness. At night they lighted their camp-fires: the cooks boiled the porridge for each kurén in huge copper kettles; an unsleeping sentinel stood all night long beside the blazing fires. But the Zaporozhtzi soon began to tire of inactivity and prolonged sobriety, unaccompanied by any fighting. The Koshevói even ordered the allowance of liquor to be doubled, which was sometimes done in the army when difficult enterprises or operations were under way. The young men in general, and Taras Bulba's sons in particular, did not like this life. Andríi was visibly bored. "You silly head!" said Taras to him: "Be patient, kazák, you will be Atamán some day. And he is not a good warrior who loses his spirit in an im-

portant affair; but he is good who does not weary even of inaction, who endures everything, and, no matter what you do to him, turns it to account." But hot youth cannot agree with age: the two have different natures, and they look at the same thing with different eyes.

But, in the meantime, Taras's regiment, led by Tovkach, arrived; with him were, also, two Yesaúls, the Scribe, and other regimental officers: the kazáks numbered over four thousand in all. There were among them many volunteers, who had risen of their own free will, without any summons, as soon as they heard what the matter was. The Yesaúls brought to Taras's sons the blessing of their aged mother, and to each a holy image of cypress-wood, from the Mezhigorsk monastery in Kiev. The two brothers hung the holy ikóni round their necks, and involuntarily grew pensive, as they recalled their old mother. What did this blessing prophesy, what did it say to them? Was it a blessing for their victory over the enemy, and then a joyful return to their home with booty and glory, to be everlastingly commemorated in the songs of the bandura-players, or was it . . . ?

But the future is not to be known, and stands before a man like autumnal fogs rising from the swamps: birds fly to and fro in it, with flapping

wings, never recognising one another, the dove not seeing the vulture, nor the vulture the dove, and no one knows how near he may be flying to his destruction.

Ostap had, long before, attended to his duties, and gone to the barrack. Andríi, without knowing why, felt a sort of oppression in his heart. The kazáks had finished their evening meal; the evening had fully quieted down, the wonderful July night ruled the air: but he did not go to the barracks, he did not lie down to sleep, and involuntarily he surveyed the whole scene before him. In the sky, with a thin, sharp gleam, twinkled innumerable stars. The plain was covered, far and wide, by wagons scattered over its expanse, their swinging tar-buckets smeared with tar, loaded with every description of goods and provisions captured from the foe. By the side of the carts, under the carts, and far beyond the carts, Zaporozhtzi were everywhere visible, stretched out upon the grass,—all asleep in picturesque attitudes: one had thrust a sack under his head, another his cap, still another was simply making use of his comrade's side. Swords, guns, arquebuses, short-stemmed pipes with copper mountings, iron awls, and a flint and steel were inseparable from every kazák. The heavy oxen, with legs doubled under them, lay in huge, whitish

masses, and at a distance looked like grey stones scattered on the slopes of the plain. On all sides the heavy snores of sleeping warriors had already begun to rise from the grass, and were answered from the plain by the ringing neighs of their steeds, chafing at their hobbled feet. Meanwhile, a certain grim magnificence was mingled with the beauty of the July night. It was the distant glare of conflagrations from the country round about. In one place the flames spread tranquilly and grandly over the sky; in another, having encountered something else on fire, they suddenly burst into a whirlwind, and flew, hissing, upwards, to the very stars, and torn fragments faded away in the most distant quarter of the heavens. There a black monastery like a grim Carthusian monk stood threatening, and displaying its dark magnificence at every flash; yonder burned the monastery garden. It seemed as though the trees could be heard hissing, as they wrapped themselves in smoke; and when the fire leaped aside, it suddenly lighted up with a phosphorescent lilac-rose-hued gleam the ripe plums, or turned the yellowing pears here and there to ruddy gold; and there, among them all, on the wall of a building or against the trunk of a tree, a black blot, hung the body of a poor Jew or monk who had perished in the flames with the building. Far away, high

above the conflagration, hovered birds, which looked like a cluster of tiny black crosses upon a fiery background. The town, thus laid bare, seemed asleep; its spires and roofs, and the stockade and walls flashed quietly in the glare of the distant conflagrations. Andríi made the rounds of the kazák ranks. The fires beside which the sentinels sat were on the point of dying out; and even the sentinels were asleep, having devoured oatmeal and dumplings with genuine kazák appetites. He was amazed at such carelessness, and said to himself: "'Tis well that there is no strong enemy near at hand, and no one to fear." At last he went to one of the transport-wagons, climbed into it, and lay down upon his back, thrusting his clasped hands under his head; but he could not sleep, and gazed long at the sky. It was all open before him; the air was pure and transparent; the dense mass of stars which constitutes the Milky Way, and traverses the sky in a belt, was flooded with light. From time to time Andríi forgot himself, to a degree, and a light mist of dreaming seemed to veil the heavens from him for a moment; and then it cleared away, and they became visible again.

During one of these intervals it seemed to him that some strange human figure was flitting before him. Thinking it was merely a dream-apparition

which would immediately fade away, he opened his eyes fully and beheld a withered, emaciated face bending over him, and gazing straight into his eyes. The long, coal-black hair fell, uncoiffed, dishevelled, from beneath a dark veil which was thrown over the head; and the strange glitter of the eyes and the death-like brown tone of the face, which threw the sharply-cut features into relief, inclined him to believe that it was an apparition. His hand involuntarily grasped his arquebuse, and he exclaimed almost convulsively: "Who are you? If you are an evil spirit, begone from my sight! If you are a living being, you have chosen an unseemly time for your jest; I will kill you with a single shot!"

In answer to this, the apparition laid its finger upon its lips, and seemed to entreat silence. He dropped his hand, and began to scrutinise it more attentively. He recognised it as a woman from the long hair, the brown neck, the half-concealed bosom. But she was not a native of those regions; her whole face was swarthy, wasted by disease; her broad cheek-bones stood out prominently above her hollow cheeks; her narrow eyes rose upwards in an arch. The more he gazed at her features, the more he discerned in them that which was familiar. At last, unable to restrain himself longer, he said: "Tell me, who are you? It

seems to me that I know you, or have seen you somewhere."

"Two years ago, in Kiev."

"Two years ago, in Kiev!" repeated Andríi, endeavouring to collect in his mind all that still lingered in his memory of his former student life. He looked intently at her once more, and suddenly exclaimed, at the top of his voice: "You are the Tatár! the servant of the young noblewoman, the Voevod's daughter!"

"S-sh!" cried the Tatár, clasping her hands with a gesture of supplication, trembling all over, and turning her head round in order to see whether any one had been waked up by Andríi's loud exclamation.

"Tell me, tell me, why are you here?" said Andríi, almost panting, in a whisper, interrupted every moment by inward emotion. "Where is the young lady? is she alive?"

"She is now in the city."

"In the city!" he exclaimed, again almost in a shriek, and felt that all the blood suddenly flew to his heart. "Why is she in the city?"

"Because the old nobleman himself is in the city: he has been Voevod of Dubno for the last year and a half."

"Is she married? How strange you look! Tell me about her!"

"She has had nothing to eat for two days."

"What!"

"Not one of the inhabitants has had a morsel of bread for a long while past; all have been eating earth only."

Andríi was astonished.

"The young lady saw you from the city ramparts, among the Zaporozhtzi. She said to me, 'Go, say to the knight: If he remembers me, let him come to me; and do not forget to make him give you a bit of bread for my aged mother, for I do not wish to see my mother die before my very eyes. Better that I should die first, and she afterwards! Beseech him: clasp his knees, his feet: he, also, has an aged mother; let him give you bread for her sake.'"

Many feelings awoke and flamed up in the young kazák's breast.

"But how came you hither? By what road did you arrive?"

"By an underground passage."

"Is there an underground passage?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"You will not betray it, knight?"

"I swear by the holy Cross that I will not."

"You must descend into the gully, and cross the water-course yonder, among the reeds."

" And it leads into the city? "

" Straight into the town monastery."

" Let us go, let us go, at once! "

" A bit of bread, in the name of Christ and of His holy Mother! "

" Good, so be it. Stand here beside the wagon — or, better still, lie down in it; no one will see you, all are asleep. I will return immediately."

And he set off for the transports, which contained the provisions belonging to their barrack. His heart beat violently. All the past, all that had been extinguished by the kazák bivouacs, by the stern battle of life, flamed up at once to the surface, and, in its turn, drowned the present. Again, as from the dark depths of the sea, the proud woman rose up before him: again in his memory shone forth her beautiful arms, her eyes, her laughing mouth, her thick, dark chestnut hair, falling in curls upon her shoulders, the elastic, well-knit members of her maiden figure. No, they had not been extinguished in his breast; they had not vanished: they had simply withdrawn to one side, in order, for a time, to make way for other strong emotions; but often, very often, the young kazák's deep slumbers had been troubled by them, and often, waking, he had lain sleepless on his bed, without being able to explain the cause.

He walked on; but his heart beat more violently

still at the mere thought of seeing her again, and his young knees shook. When he reached the transport, he had utterly forgotten the reason for his coming; he raised his hand to his brow, and rubbed it long, trying to recollect what he meant to do. At last he trembled, and was filled with terror: the thought suddenly occurred to him that she was dying of hunger. He flung himself upon the wagon and seized several large loaves of black bread; but then he thought: "Is not this food, which is suited to a robust and easily-satisfied Zaporozhetz, too coarse and unfit for her delicate frame?" Then he remembered that the Koshevói, on the previous evening, had reproved the cooks for having cooked up all the buckwheat flour into porridge at once, when there was plenty for at least three times. In the full assurance that he would find plenty of porridge in the kettles, he drew out his father's travelling kettle, and went with it to the cook of their barrack, who was sleeping alongside two huge kettles, holding about ten bucketfuls apiece, under which the ashes still glowed. Glancing into them, he was amazed to find both empty. Supernatural powers must have been required to eat it all, the more so as their barrack numbered fewer men than the others. He looked into the kettles of the other kuréns,—nothing anywhere. Involuntarily there recurred

to his mind, "The Zaporozhtzi are like children: if there is little they eat it, if there is much they leave nothing." What was he to do? Still, somewhere in the wagon belonging to his father's regiment there was, he thought, a sack of white bread, which they had found when they pillaged the bakery of a monastery. He went straight to his father's load, but it was not there. Ostap had taken it and put it under his head; and there he lay, stretched out on the ground, snoring so that the whole plain reverberated. Andríi seized the sack abruptly with one hand, and gave it a jerk, so that Ostap's head fell on the ground, and the latter sprang up, half awake, and sitting there, with closed eyes, shouted at the top of his lungs: "Stop him! Stop the damned Lyakh! Catch the horse!"—"Silence! I'll kill you!" shouted Andríi, in terror, brandishing the sack over him. But Ostap did not continue his speech, quieted down, and emitted such a snore that the grass on which he lay undulated with his breath.

Andríi glanced timidly about him on all sides, to see if Ostap's dream-ravings had waked any of the kazáks. Only one scalp-locked head rose up in the adjoining barrack, glanced about, then dropped back on the ground. After waiting a couple of minutes, he set out with his burden. The Tatár woman still lay there, scarcely breath-

ing. " Rise, let us go! Fear not, all are sleeping. Can you take one of these loaves if I cannot carry all? " So saying, he flung the sacks on his back, pulled out another sack of millet as he passed a wagon, took in his hands the loaves he had wanted to give the Tatár woman to carry and, bending somewhat under his load, went boldly through the ranks of slumbering Zaporozhtzi.

" Andríi," said old Bulba as he passed. His heart died within him. He halted, all of a tremble, and said softly: " What is it? "

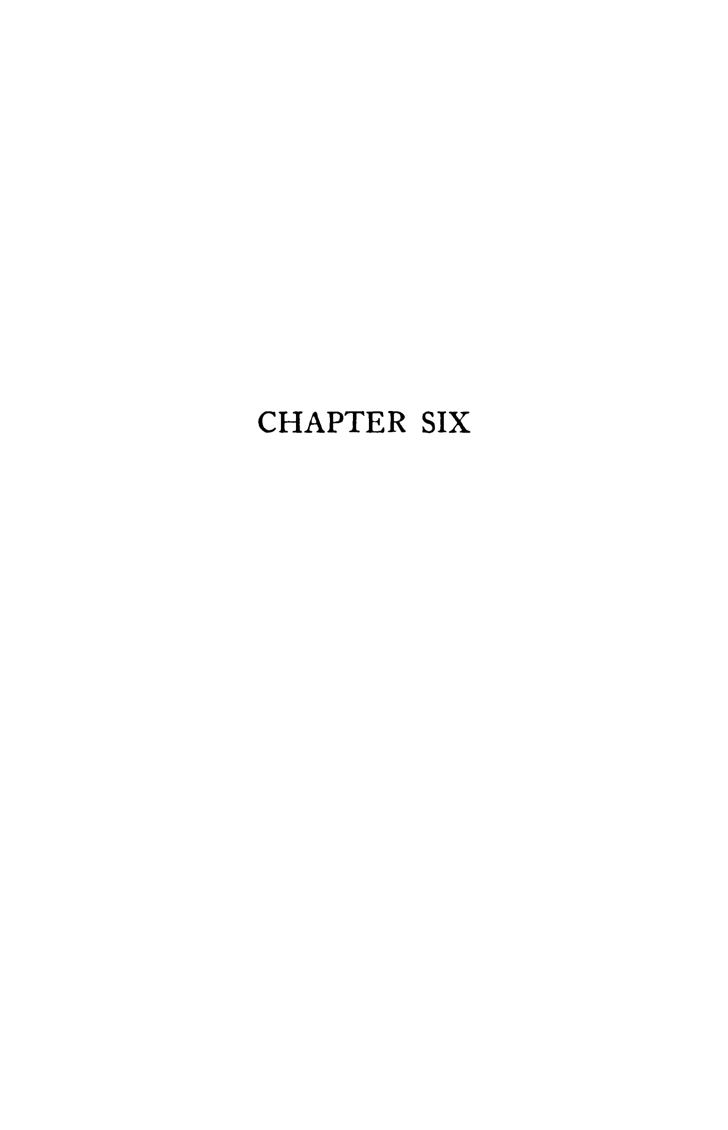
" There's a woman with you! When I get up I'll give you a sound thrashing! Women will lead you to no good." So saying, he leaned his head upon his hand, and gazed intently at the muffled form of the Tatár.

Andríi stood there more dead than alive, not daring to look his father in the face. And when he did raise his eyes and glance at him, old Bulba was fast asleep, with his head resting in the palm of his hand.

He made the sign of the cross on his breast. Fear fled from his heart even more rapidly than it had attacked it. When he turned to look at the Tatár woman, she stood before him like a dark, granite statue, all muffled in her veil; and the glow of the crimson glare in the distance lighted up only her eyes, dull as the eyes of a corpse. He plucked

her by the sleeve, and both went on together, glancing incessantly behind them; and, at last, they descended the slope into a small ravine, almost a hole, at the bottom of which a stream flowed lazily, overgrown with sedge, and strewn with mossy hummocks. Descending into this ravine they were completely concealed from view of all the plain occupied by the Zaporozhian camp. At least, Andríi, as he glanced back, saw that the abrupt declivity rose behind him like a steep wall, taller than a man's stature. On its crest waved a few stalks of steppe-grass; and above them, in the sky, hung the moon, like a reaping-hook of pure, ruddy gold, set a-slant. The breeze, blowing off the steppe, warned them that the dawn was not far off. But nowhere was the distant crow of a cock audible. There had been not a single cock for a long time past, either in the city or in the devastated neighbourhood. They crossed the stream on a narrow plank, beyond which rose the opposite bank, that appeared higher than the one behind them, and formed a complete precipice. It seemed as though this were a strong and solid point of the citadel; at all events, the earthen rampart was lower there, and no garrison appeared behind it. But further on rose the thick monastery wall. The precipitous bank was all overgrown with steppe-grass, and in the narrow ravine

between it and the stream grew tall reeds, almost to the height of a man. At the summit of the ravine were visible the remains of a wattled fence, revealing that a garden had once existed there; in front of it, the broad leaves of the burdock, from among which rose pig-weed and blackthorn, and sunflowers, rearing their heads high above all the rest. Here the Tatár flung off her high-heeled slippers, and went bare-foot, gathering up her gown carefully, for the spot was marshy, and soaked with water. Forcing their way through the reeds, they halted before a pile of faggots and brushwood. Pushing aside the brushwood, they found a sort of earthen arch — an opening not much larger than the mouth of an oven. The Tatár woman bent her head, and went first. Andríi followed, bending as low as he could, in order to pass with his sacks; and both soon found themselves in total darkness.



CHAPTER SIX

VI

ANDRÍI could hardly move in the dark and narrow earthen corridor, as he followed the Tatár, dragging after him his sacks of bread. " It will soon be light," said his guide: "we are nearing the spot where I placed a candle." And, in fact, the dark earthen walls began to be gradually illuminated. They reached a little widening where, apparently, there had once been a chapel; at least, a small table was set against the wall, like an altar-table, and above it was visible the faded, almost entirely obliterated picture of a Catholic Madonna. A small silver lamp hanging before it barely illuminated it. The Tatár stooped, and picked up from the earth a brass candlestick with a tall, slender foot, and snuffers, pin, and extinguisher hanging from it on chains, which she had left there. She lighted it at the silver lamp. The light grew stronger, and as they went on, now illumined by it, and again enveloped in pitchy shadow, they suggested a picture by Gerard Douw.

The knight's handsome, rosy countenance, over-

flowing with health and youth, presented a strong contrast to the pale, emaciated face of his companion. The passage grew a little more roomy, so that Andríi was able to straighten himself up. He gazed with curiosity at the earthen walls. Here, as in the catacombs at Kiev, were visible niches in the walls; and here and there stood coffins. In some places they came across human bones which had become softened with the dampness, and were crumbling into dust. It was evident that here, also, pious people had taken refuge from the storms, sorrows and seductions of the world. It was extremely damp in some places; under their feet it was all water at times. Andríi was forced to halt frequently, in order to allow his companion to rest, for her fatigue constantly increased. The small piece of bread she had swallowed only caused a pain in her stomach, which had grown unused to food; and she often stood motionless for several minutes at a time in one spot.

At last a small iron door appeared before them. "Now, glory be to God, we have arrived!" said the Tatár in a faint voice, and tried to raise her hand to knock; but she had not the strength. Andríi knocked loudly at the door in her stead. The echo which followed showed that there was a large space beyond the door. Then the echo

changed, as though encountering lofty arches. In a couple of minutes a rattling of keys became audible, and some one could be heard, apparently descending a staircase. At last the door opened: a monk, standing on a narrow staircase, with the key and a candle in his hands, admitted them. Andríi involuntarily stopped short at the sight of a Catholic monk,— one of those who had aroused such hatred and disdain among the kazáks, who had treated them even more ruthlessly than they had treated the Jews.

The monk, on his side, started back at the sight of a Zaporozhian kazák; but an inaudible word uttered by the Tatár reassured him. He lighted them, locked the door behind them, and led them up the stairs; and they found themselves beneath the dark and lofty arches of the monastery church. Before one of the altars, adorned with tall candlesticks and candles, knelt a priest absorbed in silent prayer. Near him, on each side, knelt two young choristers in lilac cassocks, with white lace surplices, and censers in their hands. He was praying that heaven would send down miraculous intervention, that the city might be saved; that their drooping spirits might be strengthened; that patience might be given them; that the tempter, whispering complaint and weak-spirited grief over earthly misfortunes, might be banished. A few

women, resembling shadows, knelt supporting themselves against the backs of the chairs and dark wooden benches in front of them, and drooping their exhausted heads upon them. A few men knelt sadly, leaning against the pillars which supported the side arches. The stained-glass window above the altar glowed with the rosy light of dawn; and from it, on the floor, fell circles of azure, yellow and other colours, suddenly illuminating the dim church. The entire altar, even to its furthest recesses, suddenly shone forth in a radiant halo; the smoke of the censers hung like an illuminated, rainbow-hued cloud in the air. Andríi gazed from his dark corner, not without surprise, at the wonders wrought by the light. At that moment the magnificent swell of the organ suddenly filled the whole church; it grew deeper and deeper, increased in volume, passed into heavy bursts of thunder; and then, all at once, turning into heavenly music, its singing tones floated high among the arches, suggesting the voices of young maidens, and again descended into a deep roar and thunder, and then ceased. And the thunderous pulsations echoed long and tremulously among the arches; and Andríi, with mouth agape, was amazed by the wondrous music.

At that moment he felt some one pluck the skirt of his kaftan. " 'Tis time to be going," said the

Tatár. They traversed the church unperceived and emerged upon the square in front. The quadrangular square was entirely deserted; in the middle of it stood wooden pillars, showing that only a week before, perhaps, a provision market had existed there. The streets, which were then unpaved, were simply a mass of dried mud. The square was surrounded by a row of small, one-storied houses of stone or mud, on whose walls were visible wooden stakes and posts to their full height, obliquely crossed by carved wooden beams, as was the manner of building in those days, examples of which style of construction are still to be seen in some parts of Lithuania and Poland. They were covered with enormously high roofs, with a multitude of dormer-windows and ventilating orifices. On one side, quite close to the church, and taller than the others, rose a building entirely detached from the rest; probably the Town Hall or some government office. It was two stories high, and above it, in two arches, was built a belvedere, where stood a watchman; a huge clock-face was inserted in the roof.

The square seemed dead, but Andríi thought he heard a feeble groan. Glancing about him, he perceived, on the further side, a group of two or three men lying almost motionless on the ground. He fastened his eyes more intently upon them, to

see whether they were asleep or dead; and, at the same moment, he stumbled over something which lay at his feet. It was the dead body of a woman, evidently a Jewess. She appeared to have been young, though this was not discernible in her distorted and emaciated features. Upon her head was a red silk kerchief; two rows of pearls, or pearl beads adorned the ear-pieces of her head-dress; from beneath it two or three long curls in curl-papers hung down upon her withered neck, with its tightly-drawn sinews. Beside her lay a baby, clutching convulsively at her withered breast, and squeezing it with its fingers in involuntary wrath, at finding no milk there. He neither wept nor screamed, and only the gentle rise and fall of his body would lead one to think that he was not dead, or at least on the point of breathing his last.

They turned into a street, and were suddenly stopped by a madman who, catching sight of Andríi's precious burden, sprang upon him like a tiger, and clutched him, yelling, "Bread!" But his strength was not equal to his madness. Andríi repulsed him: he fell to the ground. Moved with pity, Andríi tossed him a loaf, upon which he flung himself like a mad dog, gnawing and biting it; and immediately, there in the street, he expired

in horrible convulsions, from long disuse of eating. The terrible victims of hunger startled them at almost every step. Many, apparently unable to endure their torments in their own houses, seemed to have run into the streets to see whether some nourishing power might, possibly, descend from the air. At the gate of one house sat an old woman, and it was impossible to say whether she was asleep, dead, or only unconscious; at all events, she no longer saw or heard anything, and sat motionless in one spot, her head drooping on her breast. From the roof of another house hung a strained and withered body in a rope noose. The poor fellow had not been able to endure the tortures of hunger to the end, and had preferred to hasten his death by voluntary suicide. At the sight of such terrible proofs of famine, Andríi could not refrain from asking the Tatár, "Have they really been unable to find anything with which to sustain life? If a man is driven to extremities, then there is no help for it; he must nourish himself on that which he has hitherto despised; he may sustain himself with creatures which are forbidden by the law. Anything may be eaten under such circumstances."

"They have eaten everything," said the Tatár, —"all the animals. Not a horse or a dog, nor

even a mouse, can be found in the whole city. We never had any store of provisions in the town: they were all brought in from the villages."

"But how can you, while dying such a fearful death, still dream of defending the city?"

"Possibly the Voevod might have surrendered; but yesterday the Colonel in Buzhana sent a hawk into the city with a note, saying that it was not to be given up: that he was coming to its rescue with his regiment, and was only waiting for another colonel, that they might march together. And now they are expected at any moment.— But we have reached the house."

Andríi had already seen, from afar, the house which was unlike the others, and had been built, apparently, by an Italian architect: it was constructed of thin red bricks, and had two stories. The windows of the lower story were sheltered under lofty projecting granite cornices; the upper story consisted entirely of small arches, which formed a gallery; between them, gratings with coats-of-arms could be seen; on the corners of the houses were more coats-of-arms. The broad external staircase, of tinted bricks, abutted on the square. At the foot of the staircase sat sentries, one on each side, who with one hand held the halberd standing beside him in a picturesque and symmetrical manner, and with the other supported

his drooping head, and in this attitude more resembled statues than living beings. They were neither asleep nor dozing, but seemed perfectly insensible to everything; they even paid no attention when any one ascended the stairs. At the head of the stairs they found a richly-dressed warrior, clad in armour from head to foot, holding a prayer-book in his hand. He was turning his dim eyes upon them when the Tatár spoke a word to him, and he dropped them again upon the open pages of his book. They entered the first chamber, rather a large one, serving as a reception-room, or simply as an ante-room; it was completely filled with soldiers, servants, huntsmen, cup-bearers, and other servitors indispensable to the maintenance of a Polish magnate's state, all seated along the walls, in various attitudes. The reek of extinguished candles was perceptible; two, in huge candlesticks, nearly as tall as a man, which stood in the middle of the room, were still burning, although morning had long since peeped through the wide, grated window. Andríi was about to proceed straight to a large oaken door, adorned with a coat-of-arms and a profusion of carved ornaments; but the Tatár pulled his sleeve, and pointed to a small door in the side wall. Through this they entered a corridor, and then a room, which he began to examine attentively. The light

which sifted through a crack in the shutters fell upon some objects,—a crimson curtain, a gilded cornice, a painting on the wall. The Tatár motioned to Andríi to wait here, and opened the door into another room, from which gleamed the light of a fire. Through the open door he beheld, rapidly flitting past, a tall female figure, with a splendid braid of hair falling over her uplifted arm. The Tatár returned and bade him enter.

He was never able to remember how he entered, and how the door was shut behind him. Two candles burned in the room, and a shrine-lamp glowed before a holy picture: beneath it stood a small but lofty table, with steps to kneel upon during prayer, after the Roman Catholic fashion. He turned in the other direction, and perceived a woman, who seemed to have congealed and turned to stone in the midst of some rapid movement. It seemed as though her whole form had been trying to spring towards him, and had suddenly paused. And, amazed, he stood in like manner before her. Not thus had he pictured to himself that he would see her: this was not the person whom he had formerly known; nothing about her resembled that person: but she was twice as beautiful, twice as wonderful now as she had formerly been. Then there had been something unfinished, incomplete about her: now it was a production to

which the artist had given the finishing stroke of his brush. That other one had been a charming, giddy girl: this was a beauty, a woman in the full development of her charms. Complete feeling, not scraps and hints of feeling, but all feeling, was expressed in her eyes as she raised them. The tears were not yet dry in them, and framed them in a shining dew, which pierced the very soul. Her bosom, neck and arms were moulded in proportions which indicated fully developed loveliness. Her hair which, in former days, had waved in airy ringlets about her face, had become a heavy, luxuriant mass, part of which was fastened up, while part in long, slender, beautifully curling locks spread over her breast. It seemed as though her every feature were changed. In vain did he seek to discover in them a single one of those which were engraved on his memory,—there was not one. Even her extreme pallor did not lessen her wonderful beauty: on the contrary, it seemed to impart to it an irresistibly conquering charm. And Andríi felt in all his soul a reverent timidity, and stood motionless before her. She, too, seemed surprised at the appearance of the kazák, as he stood before her in all his beauty, and the might of his young manhood, and in the very immovability of his limbs personified the utmost freedom of movement. His eyes beamed

with clear decision; his velvet brows bent in a bold arch; his sunburnt cheeks glowed with all the ardour of virginal fire; and his youthful black moustache shone like silk.

"No, I have no power to thank you, magnanimous knight," she said, her silvery voice all in a tremble. "God alone can reward you, not I, a weak woman." She dropped her eyes; her lids fell over them in beautiful, snowy crescents, guarded by lashes long as arrows; all her wondrous face bowed forward, and a delicate flush overspread it from below. Andríi knew not what reply to make to this; he wanted to express everything; he had it in his soul to express it with all the ardour he felt, and could not. He felt that something was obstructing his mouth, and words were deprived of sound; he felt that it was not for him, reared in the seminary, and in a warlike, nomadic life, to reply fitly to such language, and was wroth at his kazák nature.

At that moment the Tatár entered the room. She had cut the bread which the knight had brought in slices, and now brought it on a golden plate, and placed it before her young mistress. The beauty glanced at her, at the bread, at her again, then turned her eyes on Andríi; and there was a great deal in those eyes. That gentle glance, expressive of her weakness and her in-

ability to give utterance to the feelings which overpowered her, was far more comprehensible to Andríi than any words. His soul suddenly grew light: all within him seemed to have been released. The emotions of his soul, which, up to that moment, some one seemed to have been restraining with a heavy curb, now felt themselves set free, at liberty, and eager to pour themselves out in a resistless torrent of words. Suddenly the beauty turned to the Tatár, and inquired anxiously:

"But my mother? You took her some?"

"She is asleep."

"And my father?"

"I carried him some, also: he said that he would come and thank the knight in person."

She took the bread, and raised it to her mouth. With inexpressible delight Andríi watched her break it with her shining fingers; and, all at once, he recalled the man, mad with hunger, who had expired before his very eyes, on swallowing a morsel of bread. He turned pale and, seizing her hand, cried: "Enough! Eat no more! you have not eaten for so long that bread will be poison to you now." And she immediately dropped her hand; she laid the bread on the plate, and gazed into his eyes like a submissive child. And if any words could express — but neither chisel, nor brush, nor all-powerful speech is capable of expressing what

is sometimes to be seen in the glances of maidens, nor the tender feeling which takes possession of him who sees such maiden glances.

"Tzaritza!" exclaimed Andríi, filled, heart and soul, with emotion, and with overflowing feelings of every sort, "what do you need? what do you wish? Command me! Impose on me the most impossible task in all the world: I will fly to perform it, even though I perish. I will perish, I will! And I swear by the holy Cross, that death for your sake is so sweet — but no, it is impossible to say how sweet it is! I have three farms; half my father's drove of horses is mine; all that my mother brought my father in dowry, and still conceals even from him,— all this is mine! Not one of the kazáks now possesses such weapons as I do: for the hilt of my sword alone they would give their best drove of horses and three thousand sheep. And all this will I renounce, discard, throw aside, — I will burn it, drown it if you will but say the word, or even move your delicate black brows! But I know that I am probably talking wide of the mark; that all this is not fitting here; that it is not for me, who have passed my life in the seminary and in Zaporozhe, to speak as they are wont who speak among Kings, Princes and all the rest of the noble knights. I perceive that you are a dif-

ferent sort of God's creature from the rest of us, and far above all other nobles' wives and their maiden daughters."

With glowing amazement did the maiden listen, all ear, losing no single word, to this frank, sincere language, in which, as in a mirror, the strong, young spirit was reflected; and each simple word of this speech, uttered in a voice which winged its way straight to the depths of the heart, was clothed with power. And she bent forward her beautiful face, pushed back her troublesome hair, opened her mouth, and gazed long, with parted lips. Then she tried to say something, but suddenly paused, remembering that the knight came in a different class, that his father, brethren, country stood behind him as grim avengers; that the Zaporozhtzi who were besieging the city were terrible men, and a cruel death awaited all who were in the place. . . . And her eyes suddenly filled with tears. She caught up a handkerchief embroidered in silks, and threw it over her face, and in a moment it was all wet; she sat long with her beautiful head thrown back, her snowy teeth set on her lovely under-lip, as though she had suddenly felt the sting of a poisonous serpent, and without removing the handkerchief from her face, lest *he* should see her broken with grief.

"Speak one word to me!" entreated Andríi,

taking her satin hand. A sparkling fire coursed through his veins at the touch, and he pressed the hand which lay apathetically in his own.

But she maintained silence, never taking the kerchief from her face, and remained motionless.

"Why are you so sad? Tell me, why are you so sad?"

She cast aside the handkerchief, pushed back her long hair which fell over her eyes, and poured out her heart in mournful speech, in a quiet voice like the breeze which, arising on a beautiful evening, suddenly blows through a dense growth of reeds beside the stream; they rustle, murmur, and suddenly begin to emit delicately-sad sounds, and the wayfarer, pausing, in inexplicable melancholy, catches them and heeds neither the fading light nor the gay songs of the people which float past as they stray homeward from their labours in meadow and stubble-field, nor the distant rumble of a passing cart.

"Am not I worthy of eternal pity? Is not the mother who brought me into the world unhappy? Is it not a bitter fate which has fallen to my share? Art not thou a cruel executioner, my grim Fate? Thou hast brought all to my feet,— the highest nobles in the land, the wealthiest gentlemen, Counts and foreign Barons, and all the flower of our knighthood. All these were free to love me,

and any one of them would have accounted my love a great blessing. I had but to wave my hand, and the best of them, the handsomest, the very first in beauty and birth, would have become my husband. And to none of them didst thou incline my heart, O my bitter Fate! thou didst turn my heart against the noblest heroes of our land, and towards a stranger, towards our enemy? Why, O most holy Mother of God! for what sins dost thou so pitilessly, so mercilessly persecute me? In abundance and superfluity of luxury my days have been passed; the richest dishes, the sweetest wines have been my food. And to what end was it all? What was it all for? In order that I might, at the last, die a cruel death, such as is not the lot of even the meanest beggar in the kingdom? And was it not enough that I was condemned to so horrible a fate; not enough that, before my own end I should behold my father and mother perish in intolerable torment, when I would willingly have given my own life twenty times over to save them? All this was not enough: before my own death I must see and hear words and love such as I had never known before. It needs must be that he should break my heart in pieces with his utterances; that my bitter lot should be rendered still more bitter; that my young life should be made yet more sad! that my death should seem even more

terrible; and that, dying, I should reproach thee still more, O cruel Fate! and thee — forgive my sin — O holy Mother of God!"

And when she ceased in despair, a feeling of hopelessness was expressed in her face; every feature spoke of gnawing sorrow; and all, from the sadly bowed brow and downcast eyes, to the tears trickling down and drying on her softly-flushed cheeks, seemed to say: "There is no happiness in this face."

"Such a thing was never heard of since the world began. It cannot be, it shall not be!" said Andríi, "that the best and most beautiful of women should suffer so bitter a fate, when she was born that all the best there is in the world should bow before her as before a Saint. No, you shall not die! I swear it by my birth, and by all I hold dear in the world, you shall not die. But if it must indeed be so; if nothing, neither strength, nor prayer, nor heroism will avail to avert that cruel fate,— then we will die together, and I will die first. I will die before you, at your beauteous knees, and even in death they shall not part us."

"Deceive not yourself and me, knight," she said, gently shaking her beautiful head; "I know, and to my great sorrow I know only too well, that it is impossible for you to love me. I know what your duty is, and what your Faith. Your father,

your comrades, your fatherland call you,— and we are your enemies."

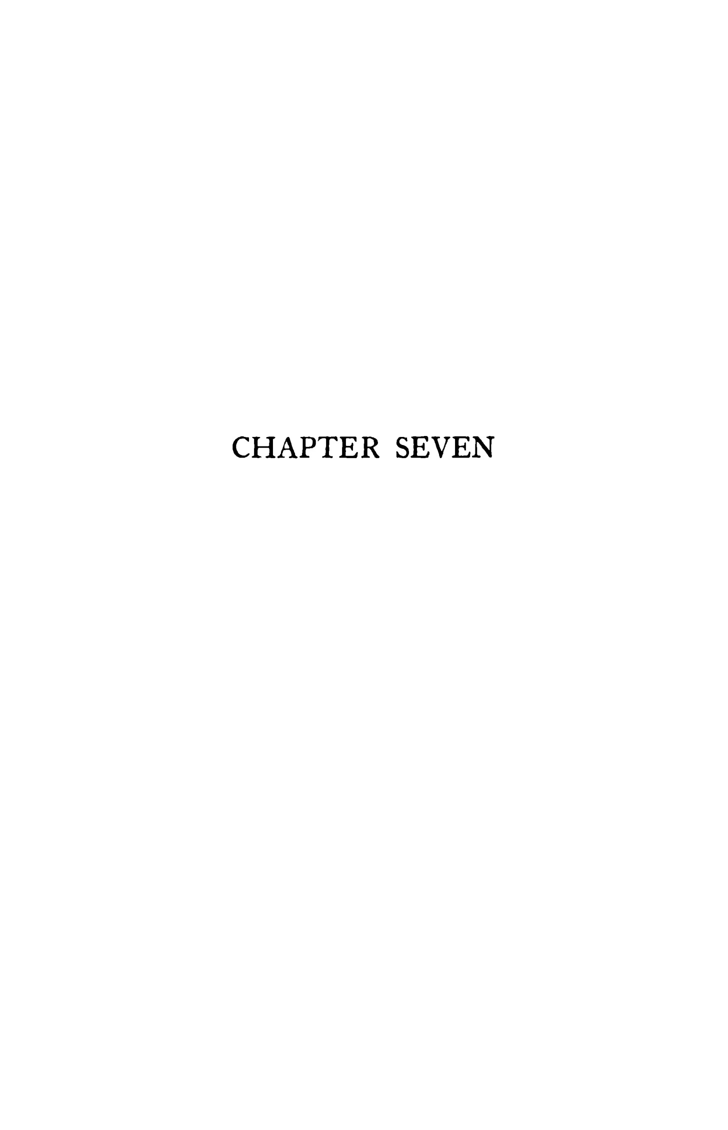
"And what are my father, my comrades, my fatherland to me?" said Andríi, shaking his head with a quick movement, and straightening up his young figure like a poplar beside the river. "Be that as it may, I have no one, no one, no one!" he repeated with the same voice and movement of the hand wherewith the buoyant, irrepressible kazák expresses his determination to do some unheard-of deed, impossible to any other man. "Who has said that my fatherland is the Ukraina? Who gave it to me for my country? Our fatherland is the one our spirit longs for, the one which is dearest of all to it. My country is—you! That is my fatherland, and that land I bear in my heart. I shall bear it there all my life long, and I will see whether any of the kazáks can tear it thence. And I will renounce everything, barter everything, I will lose myself for that country!"

Petrified for an instant, she gazed into his eyes like a beautiful statue, and suddenly burst out sobbing; and with that wonderful feminine impetuosity, of which only grand-souled, uncalculating women, created for fine impulses are capable, she threw herself upon his neck, encircling it with her wondrous, snowy arms, and fell to weeping. At that moment indistinct shouts rang out in the

streets, accompanied by the sound of trumpets and kettle-drums; but he heard them not. He was conscious of nothing save the lovely mouth which was bathing him in its warm, sweet breath, of the tears streaming down his face, and her long unbound, perfumed hair which veiled him completely in its dark, shining silk.

At that moment the Tatár ran in with a cry of joy. "Saved, saved!" she cried, beside herself. "Our troops have arrived in the city. They have brought corn, millet, flour and Zaporozhtzi in chains." But neither of them heard that *our troops* had arrived in the city, nor what they had brought with them, nor how they had bound the Zaporozhtzi. Filled with feelings untasted elsewhere on earth, Andríi kissed the sweet mouth which pressed his cheek, and the sweet mouth did not remain unresponsive. In this union of kisses they experienced that which it is given to a man to feel but once in his lifetime.

And the kazák was lost! He was lost to Kazák chivalry. Never again will he behold Zaporozhe, nor his father's house, nor the church of God. The Ukraina will never more behold the bravest of her sons, who have undertaken to defend her. Old Taras will tear a grey tuft from his scalp-lock, and curse the day and the hour in which such a son was born to dishonour him.



CHAPTER SEVEN

VII

NOISE and movement were rife in the camp of the Zaporozhtzi. At first no one could explain the true reason why the army had managed to enter the city. Afterwards it appeared that the Pereyaslavsky barrack, encamped before the side gate of the city, had been dead drunk; so it was no wonder that half of the men had been killed, and the other half bound before they knew what it was all about. While the neighbouring kuréns, aroused by the uproar, were grasping their weapons, the army had already passed through the gate, and the rear ranks fired upon the sleepy and only half-sober Zaporozhtzi, who were pressing in disorder upon them.

The Koshevói ordered all to be assembled; and when all were standing in a ring, and had removed their caps and become quiet, he said: "Just see, brother nobles, what happened last night! See what drunkenness has led to! See what an insult the enemy has put upon us! Evidently, it is so arranged with us, that if one kindly doubles your allowance, then you are ready to get drunk, and the

enemies of Christ can not only take your very trousers off you, but can even sneeze in your faces without your hearing them!"

The kazáks all stood with drooping heads, knowing well that they were guilty: only one, Kukubenko, the atamán of the Nezamaisky kurén, answered back. "Stop, father!" said he; "although it's not lawful to make such a retort when the Koshevói speaks, in the presence of the whole army, yet it is necessary to say that that wasn't the way of it. You have not been quite just in your reprimand. The kazáks would have been guilty and deserving of death, had they got drunk on the march, during war, or heavy, toilsome labour; but we have been camped down here unoccupied, loitering in vain before the city. It was not a Fast, or any other time of Christian abstinence: how can a man do otherwise than get drunk in idleness? There's no sin in that. But we'd better show them what it is to attack innocent people. They first beat us well, and now we'll give them such a beating that they won't carry five of them home again."

The speech of the barrack atamán pleased the kazáks. They raised their utterly despondent heads upright, and many nodded approvingly, muttering: "Kukubenko has spoken well!" And Taras Bulba, who stood not far from the Koshe-

vói, said: "How now, Koshevói? Kukubenko has spoken truth. What have you to say to that?"

"What have I to say? I say, Blessed be the father who begat such a son! It requires not much wisdom to utter words of reproof; but much wisdom is needed to say such words as, without cursing a man's misfortune, encourage him, restore to him his spirit, put spurs to the horse of his soul, refreshed by watering. I meant myself to speak words of comfort to you, but Kukubenko has forestalled me."

"The Koshevói also has spoken well!" rang through the ranks of the Zaporozhtzi. "His words are good," repeated others. And even the grey-heads who stood there like dark-blue doves, nodded their heads, and twitching their grey moustaches, said softly: "That word was well spoken!"

"Listen now, noble sirs," continued the Koshevói. "To take a city, scale it, undermine it as the foreign engineers do, is the sort of shamming we'll leave to the enemy: that's not proper nor an affair for a kazák. But, judging from appearances, the enemy entered the city without many provisions; they hadn't many carts with them. The people in the city are hungry: they will eat up everything in a trice; and the horses will do the

same with the hay. . . I don't know whether one of their Saints will toss them down anything from heaven with hay-forks: God alone knows that: but their Catholic priests are clever at empty words. By one means or another they will leave the city. Divide yourselves, therefore, into three forces, and take up your posts before the three gates; five kuréns before the principal gate, and three kuréns before each of the others. Let the Dyadnivsky and Korsunsky barracks go into ambush! Colonel Taras and his regiment, into ambush! the Tytarevsky and the Tunnoshevsky kuréns, as reserves on the right side of the transports, the Shcherbenovsky and the upper Steblikivsky on the left! And select from the ranks the young men of most quarrelsome tongue to gall the foe! All Lyakhs are an empty-headed lot, and can't endure abuse, and perhaps this very day they will issue forth from the gates. Let each atamán inspect his kurén: if any are not of full strength, recruit them from the remnants of the Peryaslavsky kurén. Inspect them all afresh! Give a loaf and a beaker to each kazák, to sober him. But, surely, every one must be satiated after last night; for all stuffed themselves so that, truth to tell, I'm only surprised that no one burst during the night. And here is one further command: If any Jew rum-seller sells a kazák so much as a single jug of

his vile brandy, I'll nail a pig's ear to his very forehead, the dog, and I'll hang him up by the feet! To work, my men, to work!"

Thus did the Koshevói issue his orders; and all did him reverence, bowing low, even to his girdle, and without putting on their caps, they set out for their transports and camps; and only after they had gone a considerable distance did they don their caps. All began to equip themselves; they tested their swords and cutlasses, poured powder from the sacks into their powder-flasks, rolled out and arranged the wagons, and picked out their horses.

On his way to his regiment Taras wondered, and could not explain to himself, what had become of Andríi; had he been captured and bound while asleep, with the others? But no, Andríi was not the man to go alive into captivity. And he was not to be seen among the slaughtered kazáks. Taras pondered deeply, and went past his regiment without being aware that some one had long been calling him by name.

"Who wants me?" he said, coming to himself at last. Before him stood the Jew Yankel.

"Sir Colonel, Sir Colonel!" said the Jew in a hurried, broken voice, as though desirous of revealing something not utterly useless. "I've been in the city, Sir Colonel!"

Taras looked at the Jew, and wondered how he had already succeeded in entering the city.—"What enemy took you there?"

"I'll tell you at once," said Yankel. "As soon as I heard the uproar at daybreak, and the kazáks began to fire, I seized my kaftan, and without stopping to put it on, ran at the top of my speed, thrusting my arms in on the way, because I wanted to know, as soon as possible, the cause of the noise, and why the kazáks were firing at dawn. I took and ran to the very gate of the city, at the moment when the last of the troops were passing through. I look — and at the head of the file is Cornet Galyandovich. He is a man well known to me: he has owed me a hundred ducats for more than two years past. I ran after him, as though to claim the debt of him, and so entered the city with them."

"So you entered the city, and wanted him to settle the debt!" said Taras; "and he didn't order you to be hung on the spot, like a dog?"

"God is my witness that he did want to hang me," replied the Jew: "his servants had already seized me, and thrown a rope about my neck. But I besought the nobleman, and said that I would wait for my money as long as he liked, and promised to send him more if only he would help me to collect my debts from the other knights; for I will

tell your nobility, that the Cornet has not a ducat in his pocket, although he has farms and properties and four castles, and steppe-land that extends clear to Shklov; but he has not a groschen, any more than a kazák. And now, if the Breslau Jews had not fitted him out, he wouldn't have been able to go to the war. That was the reason he didn't go to the Diet."

"What did you do in the city? Did you see any of our people?"

"Certainly, many of our people are there: Itzok, Rakhum, Samuel, Khaivalkh, Yevrei the revenue-farmer . . ."

"May they perish, the dogs!" shouted the enraged Taras. "Why do you name over your Jew tribe to me? I'm asking you about our Zaporozhtzi."

"I saw none of our Zaporozhtzi: I saw only Pan [1] Andríi."

"You saw Andríi!" shouted Bulba. "What's he doing there? Where did you see him? in a dungeon? in a pit? dishonoured? bound?"

"Who would dare to bind Pan Andríi? Now he's so grand a knight, by God . . I hardly recognised him. Gold on his shoulder-straps, gold on his belt, gold everywhere, always gold:

[1] *Pan* is the Polish word used when speaking of men of gentle or noble birth. I. F. H.

as when the sun shines in spring, and every bird begins to chirp, and sing in the orchards, so is he shining all over with gold. And his horse, which the Voevod himself gave him, is the very best: the horse alone is worth two hundred ducats."

Bulba was petrified. "Why has he put on strange garments?"

"He has put them on because they are finer. And he rides about, and the others ride about, and he teaches them, and they teach him; like the very richest sort of a Polish *pan*."

"Who has forced him to this?"

"I shouldn't say that he had been forced. Doesn't the noble lord know that he went over to them of his own free will?"

"Who went over?"

"Why, Pan Andríi."

"Went where?"

"Went over to their side: he's entirely theirs, now."

"You lie, you hog's ear!"

"How is it possible that I should lie? Am I a fool that I should lie? Would I lie at the risk of my head? Don't I know that Jews are hung like dogs if they lie to noble lords?"

"Then this means that, in your opinion, he has betrayed his fatherland and his Faith?"

" I don't say that he has betrayed anything: I merely said that he had gone over to them."

" You lie, you devil of a Jew! Such a deed was never known in a Christian land. You're getting things mixed up, you dog!"

" May grass grow upon the threshold of my house if I am mixing things! May every one spit upon the grave of my father, my mother, my father's father-in-law, and my mother's father, if I am mixing things! If the noble lord wishes, I can even tell him why he went over to them."

" Why?"

" The Voevod has a beautiful daughter. Holy God! what a beauty!" Here the Jew tried his best to depict beauty in his own person, throwing out his hands, screwing up his eyes, and twisting his mouth to one side, as though testing something by tasting it.

" Well, what of that?"

" He did it, went over to them, for her sake. When a man's in love, then he's just like a boot-sole, which, if you soak it, you can bend in any direction, and it will yield."

Bulba pondered deeply. He remembered that the power of weak woman is great — that she had ruined many a strong man, that this was the weak point in Andríi's nature — and he stood long in one place, as though rooted to the spot.

"Listen, noble lord, and I will tell the noble lord all," said the Jew. "As soon as I heard the uproar, and saw them going through the city gate, I caught up a string of pearls, in case of any emergency. For there are beauties and noblewomen there; 'and if there are beauties and noblewomen,' I said to myself, 'they will buy pearls, even if they have nothing to eat.' And, as soon as ever the Cornet's servants set me at liberty, I hastened to the Voevod's palace to sell my pearls. I asked all manner of questions of the Tatár serving-woman: the wedding is to take place as soon as they have driven off the Zaporozhtzi. Pan Andríi has promised to drive off the Zaporozhtzi."

"And you didn't slay him on the spot, you devil's brat?" shouted Bulba.

"Why should I kill him? He went over of his own free will. What's his crime? He liked it better there, so he went there."

"And you saw him face to face?"

"Face to face, as God is my witness! Such a magnificent warrior! more splendid than all the rest. God grant him health, he knew me at once; and when I approached him he said immediately . . ."

"What did he say?"

"He said — First he beckoned me with his finger, and then he said, 'Yankel!' and I, 'Pan

Andríi!' said I. 'Yankel, tell my father, tell my brother, tell all the kazáks, all the Zaporozhtzi, everybody, that my father is no longer my father, nor my brother my brother, nor my comrades my comrades; and that I mean to fight them all, all!'"

"You lie, you devil of a Judas!" shouted Taras, beside himself with rage. "You lie, dog! I'll kill you, Satan! Get away from here! if not, death awaits you!" So saying, Taras unsheathed his sword.

The frightened Jew set off instantly, at the full speed of his shrunken legs. He ran for a long time without looking back, through the Kazák camp, and then far out on the deserted plain, although Taras did not pursue him at all, reasoning that it was foolish to vent his rage on the first person who came to hand. Then he recollected that he had seen Andríi on the night before, traversing the camp with some woman; and he bowed his grey head. And still he would not believe that so disgraceful a thing could have happened, and that his own son had sold his Faith and his soul.

Finally, he led his regiment into ambush, and hid himself, with it behind a forest — the only one which had not been burned by the kazáks. But the Zaporozhtzi, foot and horse, set out for the three gates by three different roads; one after

another the kuréns turned out: the Umansky, Popovichevsky, Konevsky, Steblikovsky, Nezamaikovsky, Gurgaziy, Tytarevsky, Tymoshevsky. The Perevaslavsky alone was wanting. Its kazáks had smoked and drunk it to its fate. One awoke to find himself bound in the enemy's hands; another never woke at all, but went in his slumber into the damp earth; and the Atamán Khlib, himself, minus his trousers and outward adornments, found himself in the camp of the Lyakhs.

The uproar among the kazáks was heard in the city. Every one hastened to the ramparts, and a lively spectacle was presented to the kazáks. Polish warriors, each handsomer than the other, stood on the wall. Their bronze helmets shone like the sun, and were adorned with feathers white as swans. Others wore light caps, pink or blue, with crowns which drooped over one ear; kaftans with the sleeves thrown back, either embroidered with gold or simply garnished with cords. Their swords and guns were richly chased, and the noble lords had paid huge prices for them; they had, also, many equipments of every sort. In front stood the heavy Budzhakovsky Colonel, haughtily, in his red cap ornamented with gold. The Colonel was taller and stouter than all the rest, and his rich and voluminous kaftan was a tight fit. On the other hand, almost by the side of the gate,

stood another Colonel, a small, dried-up man; but his little, piercing eyes gleamed sharply from under his thick and shaggily overgrown brows, and he turned quickly on all sides, gesticulating energetically with his thin, withered hand, and distributing his commands. It was evident that, in spite of his tiny body, he understood the art of war thoroughly. Not far from him stood a very tall Cornet, with thick moustaches, and he did not seem to lack colour in his face: the noble lord was fond of strong mead and hearty revelry. And behind these were visible many noblemen of all degrees, who had equipped themselves, some with their own ducats, some at the expense of the royal treasury, some with money from the Jews, by pawning everything they had in their ancestral castles. Many, also, were the senatorial parasites, whom the Senators took with them to dinners, to make a fine show, and who stole silver cups from the table and the sideboard, and, after the day's show was over, mounted some gentleman's coach-box and drove his horses. There were many of all sorts there. In some cases they had not enough money to pay for a drink, yet they were all fitted out for war.

The kazák ranks stood quietly in front of the walls. There was no gold about any of them, except here and there, perhaps, a glint of it on the

hilt of a sword or the mount of a gun. The kazáks were not addicted to decking themselves out gaily for battle: their chain-armour and their doublets were plain, and their black, red-crowned caps glowed darkly afar.

Two kazáks rode out from the ranks of the Zaporozhtzi. One was quite young, the other was older; both were fierce in words, and not bad specimens of kazáks in action — Okhrim Nash, and Mykita Golokopytenko. Behind them rode Demid Popovich, a stalwart kazák, who had been hanging about the Syech for a long time, who had been present at the siege of Adrianople, and undergone a great deal in the course of his existence. He had been burned in the conflagration, and had run away to the Syech, with tarred and blackened head and singed moustaches. But Popovich had become stout, had grown long locks of hair behind his ears, had raised moustaches black as pitch, and was a gallant fellow when it came to biting speeches, was Popovich.

"Aha, red kaftans on all the army — but what I'd like to know is, whether the strength of the troops matches them!"

"I'll give it to you!" shouted the fat Colonel from above. "I'll bind you all! Surrender your guns and horses, slaves! Have you seen how I

bound your men? — Bring out the Zaporozhtzi on the ramparts for them to see!"

And the Zaporozhtzi were led out, pinioned with ropes.

At their head stood the atamán of the barrack, Khlib, without his trousers and outward adornments, exactly as they had captured him in his drunken sleep. And the atamán bowed his head earthward in shame before the kazáks, at his nakedness, and at having been taken prisoner like a dog while asleep. His powerful head had turned grey over night.

"Grieve not, Khlib! we'll rescue you!" shouted the kazáks from below.

"Grieve not, dear friend!" shouted Atamán Borodaty. "It's not your fault that they caught you naked: that's a misfortune which may happen to any man. But it's a disgrace to them that they have exposed you to dishonour, and not covered your nakedness decently."

"You seem to be a brave army when you catch people asleep," remarked Golokopytenko, glancing at the ramparts.

"Wait, we'll clip your top-knots for you!"

"I'd like to see them clip our scalp-locks!" said Popovich, prancing about before them on his horse; then, glancing at his comrades, he said:

"Well, perhaps the Lyakhs speak the truth: if that fat-bellied fellow yonder leads them, they'll all find a good shelter behind him."

"Why do you think they'll find a good shelter?" asked the kazáks, aware that Popovich was preparing to launch some cutting remark.

"Because the whole army can hide behind him; and two devils couldn't help you to reach anybody with your spear from behind that belly of his!"

All the kazáks burst out laughing, and many of them shook their heads, saying: "What a fellow that Popovich is, if any one wants to turn a phrase! — Only, now"— But the Kazáks did not explain what they meant by that *now.*

"Fall back, fall back quickly from the wall!" shouted the Koshevói; for it appeared that the Lyakhs could not endure these biting words, and the Colonel waved his hand.

The kazáks had barely retreated from the wall when grape-shot rained down.

On the ramparts all was excitement, and the grey-haired Voevod himself made his appearance on horseback. The gates swung open, and the army sallied forth. In front came the mounted hussars. Behind them, the men in armour, then all those with brazen helmets; after them rode singly the highest nobility, each man dressed as pleased him best. The haughty nobles would not

mingle with the others in the ranks, and those who had no commands rode alone with their retinues. After these came more companies, and after these still, emerged the Cornet, then more files of men, and then the fat Colonel; and quite in the rear of the whole army came, last of all, the little Colonel. "Stop them! Keep them from drawing up, from forming in line!" shouted the Koshevói: "Let all the kuréns attack them at once! Abandon the other gates! Tytarevsky kurén, fall on one flank! Dyadkovsky kurén, fall on the other! Attack them in the rear, Kukubenko and Palivoda! Stop them, stop them! Separate them!" And the kazáks attacked on all sides, killing the Lyákhs, throwing them into confusion, and being thrown into confusion themselves. They did not even give them time to fire: it came to swords and spears at once. All merged together in a heap, and each man had an opportunity to distinguish himself.

Demid Popovich ran three common soldiers through, and knocked two of the highest nobles from their horses, saying: "Here are good horses! I have long wanted to get hold of just such horses!" And he drove the horses far afield, shouting to the kazáks who were standing about to catch them. Then he flung himself again into the mass, fell again upon the fallen nobles,

killed one, and flung his lasso round the neck of the other, tied him to his saddle, and dragged him all over the plain, after having taken from him his sword with a rich hilt, and removed from his girdle a whole coin-bag of ducats.

Kobita, a good kazák, and still very young, engaged one of the bravest men in the Polish army in single combat, and they fought long together. They had come to fisticuffs, and the kazák had nearly conquered his foe, and, throwing him down, stabbed him in the breast with his sharp Turkish knife. But he did not guard himself properly: at that moment a hot bullet struck him on the temple. The man who struck him down was the most distinguished of the nobles, the handsomest knight of an ancient and princely race. Like a stately column he bestrode his light bay steed. And many deeds of daring did this boyar perform: he clove two kazáks in twain; Feodor Korzh, the brave kazák, he overthrew together with his horse; then he shot the horse and picked the kazák off the animal with his spear; many heads and hands did he hew off; and he slew kazák Kobita, sending a bullet through his temple.

"There's the man I'd like to measure forces with!" shouted Kukubenko, the atamán of the Nezamaikovsky kurén. Spurring on his horse, he flew straight at his back, and shouted loudly, so

that all who stood near shuddered at that unearthly yell. The Lyakh tried to turn his horse quickly, and face him, but the horse did not obey: frightened by the terrible cry, it sprang aside, and the Lyakh received Kukubenko's fire. The hot ball struck him in the shoulder-blade, and he rolled from his horse.

But even then the Lyakh did not surrender: he still strove to deal his enemy a blow, but his hand grew weak and fell with his sword. Then Kukubenko, taking his heavy sword in both hands, thrust it into his mouth, already grown pallid. The sword, breaking out two teeth, cut the tongue in twain, pierced the windpipe, and penetrated deep into the ground; and so he pinned him there forever to the damp earth. His noble blood, scarlet as viburnum berries beside the river, welled up in a fountain, and stained his yellow, gold-embroidered kaftan. But Kukubenko had already left him, and was forcing his way, with his Nezamaikovsky kurén, towards another group.

"Eh, he didn't appropriate those splendid accoutrements!" said Borodaty, atamán of the Umansky kurén, leaving his men and going to the place where lay the nobleman slain by Kukubenko. "I've killed seven nobles with my own hand, but such accoutrements I have never beheld on any one." And, tempted by greed, Borodaty bent

down to remove the rich armour, and forthwith pulled out the knight's Turkish knife, set with precious stones, loosed from his belt the purse of ducats, and from his breast a wallet with fine linen, silver and a maiden's curl, carefully cherished as a souvenir. But Borodaty did not hear the red-nosed Cornet rushing upon him from the rear; he had already once hurled him from the saddle, and bestowed on him a fine gash by way of remembrance. He flourished his arm with all his might, and brought his sword down on the bended neck. Greed led to no good: the strong head rolled off, and the body fell headless, sprinkling the earth far and wide. The grim kazák soul soared heavenward, grimacing, indignant, amazed at having so suddenly quitted so stalwart a body. Before the Cornet managed to seize the atamán's head by its scalp-lock and fasten it to his saddle, a savage avenger arrived.

As a vulture hovering in the sky, beating great circles with its mighty wings, suddenly remains poised in air, in one spot, and thence darts down like an arrow upon the shrieking cock quail beside the road; just so did Taras's son Ostap fly suddenly upon the kazák, and fling a rope about his neck with one cast. The Cornet's red face grew a still deeper crimson when the cruel noose pressed his throat, and he tried to seize his pistol; but his

convulsively contracted hand could not direct the shot, and the bullet flew wild across the plain. Ostap immediately unfastened a silken cord which the Cornet carried at his saddle-bow to bind prisoners, and with his own cord bound him hand and foot, attached the cord to his saddle, and dragged him across the plain, calling all the kazáks of the Umansky kurén to come and render the last honour to their atamán.

When the Umantzy heard that the atamán of their kurén, Borodaty, was no longer among the living, they deserted the field of battle, and rushed to recover his body; and they consulted immediately as to whom they should elect to be their leader. At last they said: "But why discuss the matter? It is impossible to appoint a better leader than Bulba's Ostap: he's younger than any of us, it's true; but his judgment is that of an old man."

Ostap, doffing his cap, thanked all his kazáks for the honour, and did not decline, either on the score of his youth, or of his youthful judgment, knowing well that wartime is not a fitting season to waste oneself on such things; but he instantly led them straight at the throng and proceeded to show them all that not in vain had they elected him atamán. The Lyakhs realised that the engagement was growing too hot for them, and retreated across

the plain, with the intention of re-forming at its other extremity. But the little Colonel signalled to four fresh companies close to the gate, and they rained down grape-shot on the kazák throng; but very few men were hit: their shot took effect on the kazák oxen, who were gazing wildly at the battle. The frightened oxen bellowed, turned on the camps, smashed the wagons, and trampled many persons under foot. But Taras, emerging from ambush at the moment, with his troops, rushed forward with a yell to intercept them. He headed off the entire infuriated herd which, startled by his yell, swooped down upon the Polish regiments, overthrew the cavalry, and crushed and dispersed them all.

"O, thank you, oxen!" cried the Zaporozhtzi: "you served us on the march, and now you have served us in war." And they attacked the foe with renewed vigour. They slew many of the enemy. Many distinguished themselves,— Metelitza, Shilo, both of the Pisarenkos, Vovtuzenko, and not a few others. The Lyakhs perceived that matters were going ill, flung away their banners, and shouted for the city gates to be opened. Creaking, the iron-bound gates opened and received the weary and dust-covered riders, flocking in like sheep into the fold. Many of the Zaporozhtzi started to pursue them; but Ostap stopped

his Umantzi, saying, "Keep off! keep further away from the wall, brother nobles! 'Tis not well to approach them too closely." And he spoke truly; for from the ramparts there began to rain and pour down everything which came to hand, and a great many were struck. At that moment, the Koshevói rode up, and praised Ostap, saying, "He's a new atamán, but he's leading the army like an old one." Old Bulba glanced round to see who the new atamán might be, and beheld Ostap sitting on his horse at the head of the Umantzi, his cap cocked on one ear, and the atamán's staff in his hand.

"Who ever saw the like!" he exclaimed, as he gazed at him; and the old man rejoiced, and began to thank all the Umantzi for the honour they had conferred on his son.

The kazáks retired again, and were preparing to go into camp; but the Lyakhs showed themselves again on the city ramparts with tattered mantles. There was clotted blood on many rich kaftans, and the beautiful bronze helmets were covered with dust.

"Have you bound us?" shouted the Zaporozhtzi to them from below.

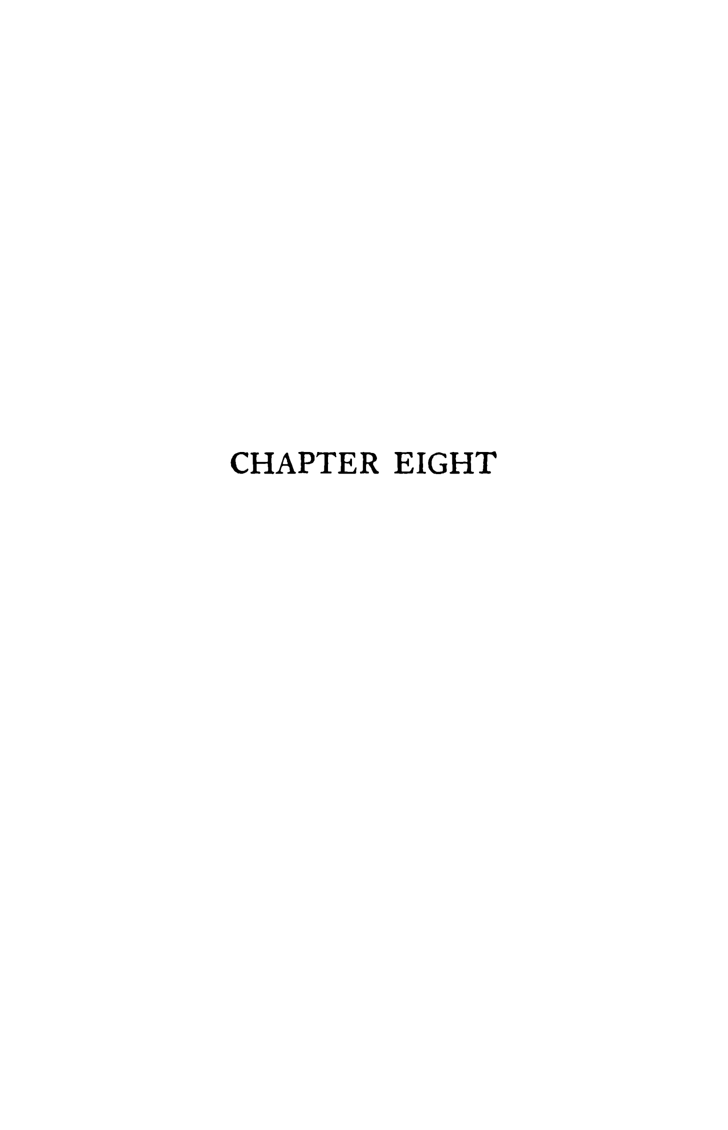
"I'll give it to you!" shouted back the fat Colonel from above, shaking a rope at them; and the weary, dust-covered warriors ceased not to

threaten, while the most exasperating on both sides exchanged fierce remarks.

At last all dispersed. One, weary with battle, stretched himself out to rest; another sprinkled his wounds with earth, and tore up for bandages kerchiefs and rich garments captured from the enemy. Others, who were less exhausted, began to sort over the corpses, and to render them the last honours. They dug graves with their swords and spears, brought earth in their caps and the skirts of their garments, laid the kazáks' bodies out decently, and buried them in fresh earth, in order that the ravens and the eagles might not claw out their eyes. But binding the corpses of the Lyakhs by tens, as they came to hand, to the tails of wild horses, they let these loose on the plain, pursued them, and lashed them for a long time on their flanks. The infuriated horses flew over furrow and hillock, through gullies and streams, and thrashed the bodies of the Poles, all covered with blood and dust, against the earth.

Then all the kuréns sat down in circles in the evening, and talked long of their deeds, and of the feats which had fallen to the share of each, for eternal repetition by newcomers and by posterity. It was long before they lay down to sleep; and longer still before old Taras, meditating what it might signify that Andríi was not among the

enemy's warriors, lay down. Had Judas been ashamed to come forth against his countrymen? or had the Jew deceived him, and had he simply been made a captive against his will? But then he recollected that Andríi's heart was boundlessly susceptible to feminine speeches: he felt ashamed, and swore a mighty oath in spirit against the fair Pole who had bewitched his son. And he would have put his oath into execution. He would not have so much as glanced at her beauty, he would have pulled her forth by her thick and splendid hair; he would have dragged her after him all over the plain, among all the kazáks. Her splendid shoulders and bosom, white as fresh-fallen snow upon the mountain-tops, would have been battered against the earth, and all covered with blood and dust. He would have dispersed her sumptuous, lovely body, in fragments. But Taras did not know what God was preparing for man on the morrow, and began to forget himself with drowsiness, and finally fell asleep. But the kazáks still went on talking among themselves; and the sober sentinel stood all night long beside the fire, never closing his eyes, and looking intently on all sides.



CHAPTER EIGHT

VIII

THE sun had not scaled half the height of heaven when all the kazáks assembled in a group. News had arrived from the Syech that the Tatárs, during the kazáks' absence, had plundered it thoroughly, had dug up the treasures which the kazáks kept buried in the ground, had killed or carried away into captivity all who remained, and had straightway set out, with all the flocks and droves of horses they had collected, for Perekop.

One kazák only, Maksim Golodukha, had torn himself out of the Tatárs' hands on the road, had stabbed the Mirza, had unbound his bag of sequins, and on a Tatár horse, in Tatár garments, had fled before his pursuers for two nights and a day and a half, ridden his horse to death, changed to another, killed that one also, and arrived at the Zaporozhian camp upon a third, having learned on the way that the Zaporozhtzi were before Dubno. He only succeeded in informing them that this misfortune had happened, but how it had happened,— whether the Zaporozhtzi who had remained behind had been carousing in kazák

fashion, and had been carried drunk into captivity, and how the Tatárs had learned in what spot the treasures of the Army were buried,— he said nothing. The kazák was extremely tired; he was all swollen, and his face was burned and scorched by the wind; he fell down at once, and a deep sleep overpowered him.

In such cases it was customary for the Koshevói to pursue the brigands on the instant, endeavouring to overtake them on the road; for, the prisoners might find themselves promptly in the bazaars of Asia Minor, in Smyrna, or the Island of Crete, and God knows in what places the scalp-locked heads of Zaporozhtzi might not be seen. This was the reason of the kazáks assembling. They all stood, to a man, with their caps on; for they were not come together at the word of command of their ruling atamán, but to take counsel together as equals with equals. "Let the old men first advise!" rose a shout from the crowd. "Let the Koshevói give his opinion!" said others.

And the Koshevói, doffing his cap, not as commander, but as a comrade among comrades, thanked all the kazáks for the honour, and said: "There are among us many old men, and those who are wiser in counsel; but since you have deemed me worthy, this is my advice: not to lose any time, comrades, but to pursue the Tatárs, for

you know, yourselves, what sort of a man the Tatár is. He will not pause with his stolen booty to await our coming, but will vanish in a twinkling, so that you can find no trace of him. Therefore, this is my counsel: Go. We have already diverted ourselves sufficiently here. The Lyakhs know what the kazáks are like. We have avenged our Faith to the extent of our powers; there's not much to satisfy greed in this famished city. And so my advice is: Go."

"Go!" rang heavily through the Zaporozhian kuréns. But such words did not suit Taras Bulba's mood at all; and he brought his frowning, iron-grey brows still lower down over his eyes, like bushes growing on a dark, lofty mountain, whose crests are suddenly covered with prickly northern frost.

"No, Koshevói, your counsel is not good," said he. "You have not spoken aright. Evidently, you have forgotten that our men captured by the Lyakhs will remain prisoners? Evidently you wish that we should not respect the first holy law of comradeship; that we should leave our brethren to be flayed alive, or to be carried about through the towns and villages after their kazák bodies have been quartered, as was done with the Hetman, and the bravest warriors in the Ukraina. Have not they already blasphemed sufficiently

against the holy things without that? What are we? I ask you all, what sort of a kazák would he be who should desert his comrade in misfortune, and let him perish like a dog in a foreign land? If it has come to such a pass that no one has any confidence in kazák honour, permitting himself to spit upon his grey moustache, and upbraid him with offensive words, then no one will blame me. I will remain here alone."

All the Zaporozhtzi then who stood there wavered.

"And have you forgotten, brave colonel," said the Koshevói, "that the Tatárs also have our comrades in their hands; that if we do not rescue them now, they will be sold into everlasting captivity among the infidels, which is worse than the most cruel death? Have you forgotten that they now hold all our treasure, won by Christian blood?"

All the kazáks pondered, and knew not what to say. None of them wished to merit disgraceful renown. Then there stepped out in front of them the oldest in years of all the Zaporozhian army, Kasyan Bovdyug. He was respected by all the kazáks. Twice had he been elected Koshevói, and he had also been a very brave kazák in the wars: but he had long been old, and had been upon no expeditions, neither did the old man like to give advice to any one; but he loved to lie constantly on

his side in the circle of kazáks, listening to the tale of every occurrence ón the kazák marches. He never joined in the conversation, but merely listened, and with his finger pressed the ashes down in the short pipe which never left his mouth; and then he would sit long, with his eyes half open, and the kazáks never knew whether he were asleep or still listening. He always stayed at home during their expeditions, but on this occasion, the whim to take part had seized upon the old man. He waved his hand, in kazák fashion, and said, "So be it! I'm going also; perhaps I may be of some service to the kazák nation." All the kazáks fell silent when he now stepped forward before the assembly, for it was long since any speech from him had been heard. Each man wanted to know what Bovdyug had to say.

"It's my turn to speak a word, brother nobles," he began: "listen, my lads, to an old man. The Koshevói spoke wisely, and as the head of the Kazák army, and bound to protect it; and regretting the treasures of the army, he could have said nothing wiser. That's a fact! That's my first speech. And now harken to my second — and this is my second speech: Colonel Taras has spoken even more truly, God grant him many years, and that such colonels as he may be plentiful in the Ukraina! The first duty and the first honour of

a kazák is to uphold comradeship. Never in all my life, brother nobles, have I heard of any kazák deserting or selling any of his comrades. The men there and the men here are equally our comrades, whether they be few or many, and all are dear to us. So this is my speech: Let those to whom the prisoners captured by the Tatárs are dear, set out after the Tatárs; and let those to whom the captives of the Poles are dear, and who do not wish to desert a righteous cause, stay behind. The Koshevói, in accordance with his duty, will accompany one half in pursuit of the Tatárs, and the other half may choose a temporary atamán to lead them. But if you will heed the words of an old man, there is no one more fit to act as temporary atamán than Taras Bulba. Not one of us is his equal in valour."

Thus spoke Bovdyug, and paused; and all the kazáks rejoiced that the old man had, in this manner, set them to rights. All tossed up their caps, and shouted: "Thanks, batko![1] He has been

[1] *Batko* is the Little Russian form of *batiushka,* and means "father" in the same way that the old English *gaffer,* derived from *grandfather,* was used as a term of respect. All priests are addressed as "batiushka," and a priest's wife is addressed and alluded to as the corresponding, "matushka"; and the two words are (as Count L. N. Tolstoy once said to me) "the only genuine Russian 'titles.'" Nevertheless, if one were to translate the two words as "father" and "mother," Russians

silent,— silent for a long time, but he has spoken at last. Not in vain did he say, when we were preparing for this expedition, that he might be useful to the kazák nation: even so has it come to pass!"

"Well, are you agreed upon anything?" asked the Koshevói.

"We are!" shouted the kazáks.

"Then the Council is at an end?"

"It is!" shouted the kazáks.

"Then listen to the military command, my lads," said the Koshevói, stepping forward, and putting on his cap; and all the kazáks took off their caps, and stood with heads uncovered and eyes fixed upon the earth, as was always the custom among the kazáks when the leader prepared to speak. "Now divide yourselves, brother nobles! Let those who wish to go take their stand on the right, and those who wish to stay on the left. Where the majority of a kurén goes, there the rest are to go; if a minority of a kurén goes over, it must be added to another kurén."

And they began to take up their positions, some on the right, some on the left. Whither the ma-

would wax hilarious; and as we do not use "gaffer" in America, and have no corresponding term of affectionate respect, readers must accept "batko" and this explanation. I. F. H.

jority of a kurén wént, there the atamán went also; and where there was a minority, the kurén attached itself to another kurén; and it came out pretty even on both sides. Those who wished to remain were nearly the whole of the Nezamaikovsky kurén, the larger half of the Popovichevsky kurén, the entire Umansky kurén, the entire Kanevsky kurén, and the larger half of the Steblikivsky and Timoshevsky kuréns. All the rest offered to go in pursuit of the Tatárs. On both sides were many stalwart and valorous kazáks. Among those who decided to pursue the Tatárs were Cherevaty, and the good old kazáks, Pokotypole, Lemish, and Khoma Prokopovich. Demid Popovich also went in that party, because he was a kazák of a very restless disposition, and he could not stay still long in one place: he had tried his hand on the Lyakhs, and now wanted to try it on the Tatárs also. The atamáns of kuréns were Nostyugan, Pokryshka, Nevynsky, any many other brave and renowned kazáks who wished to put their swords and their brawny shoulders to the test in an encounter with the Tatárs. There were, likewise, very brave kazáks not a few among those who elected to remain: the kurén atamáns Demytrovich, Kukubenko, Vertykhvist, Balan, and Bulba's Ostap. Besides these there were many valiant and distinguished kazáks: Vovtuzenko, Cherevychenko, Stepan Guska, Okh-

rim Guska, Mykola Gustyi, Zodorozhnii, Metelitza, Ivan Zakrutyguba, Mosii Shilo, Degtyarenko, Sydorenko, Pisarenko, a second Pisarenko, and still another Pisarenko, and many other good kazáks. All of them had had great experience and had travelled far and wide; they had been on the shores of Anatolia, on the salt marshes and the steppes of the Crimea, on all the rivers, great and small which empty into the Dnyeper, and on all the fords and islands of the Dnyeper: they had been in Moldavia, Valakhia, and the Turkish land; they had sailed all over the Black Sea in their double-ruddered kazák boats; they had attacked with fifty skiffs in line the tallest and richest ships; they had sunk many a Turkish galley, and had burned much, very much powder in their day; more than once had they torn up velvets and rich stuffs of cotton and silk for foot-wrappers; many a time had they beaten out buckles for the straps which confined their full trousers, from the sequins of pure gold. And every one of them had drunk up and revelled away as much as would have sufficed any other man for a whole lifetime, and there was nothing to show for it. They had squandered it all, like kazáks, in treating all the world, and in hiring music so that every one might be merry. Even now rare was the man among them who had not some property: tankards, silver porringers, bracelets,

buried under the reeds on the islands of the Dnyeper in order that the Tatárs might not find them if, in case of disaster, they should succeed in making a sudden attack on the Syech; but it would have been difficult for a Tatár to find them, for the owner himself was already beginning to forget where he had buried them. Such were the kazáks who wished to remain and take vengeance on the Lyakhs for their trusty comrades and the Faith of Christ! The aged kazák Bovdyug also wished to remain with them, saying: "My years do not permit me to pursue the Tatárs, but this is the place where I may lie down in a good kazák death. Long have I prayed to God that when my life was to end, I might end it in a war for a holy and Christian cause. And so it has come to pass. There can be no more glorious end in any other place for the old kazák."

When they had all separated, and had ranged themselves in two lines on opposite sides, the Koshevói passed through the ranks, and said: "Well, brother nobles, are the two parties satisfied with each other?"

"Yes, all satisfied, batko!" replied the kazáks.

"Then kiss one another, and say good-bye; for God knows whether you will ever see each other again in this life. Obey your Atamán, and do

what your duty bids you. You yourselves know what kazák honour commands."

And all the kazáks began to exchange kisses. The atamáns were the first to begin: stroking down their grey moustaches, they kissed each other in cross-form, then grasping each other's hands, and squeezing them firmly, each wanted to say to the other: "Well, Sir brother, shall we meet again or not?" But they did not ask the question: they kept silent, and both greyheads speculated on the future. Then the kazáks took leave of one another, to the last man, knowing well that both parties had a great deal of work before them. But they were not obliged to part at once,— they had to wait until dark night, in order that the enemy might not notice the diminution in the kazák army. Then they all went off, by kuréns, to dine.

After dinner, all who had the journey before them lay down to rest, and fell into a deep and long sleep, as though foreseeing that it was, perhaps, the last sleep they would taste in such freedom. They slept even until sunset; and when the sun had gone down, and twilight had descended to a certain degree, they began to grease their carts. When everything was in readiness, they sent the wagons on ahead, and having doffed their caps

once more to their comrades, they quickly followed the transports. The cavalry, with dignity, without shouts or whistling at the horses, tramped lightly after the foot-soldiers; and all speedily vanished in the darkness. The only sound was the dull thud of horses' hoofs, or the creaking of some wheel which had not got into working order, or had not been properly greased, because of the darkness of the night.

Their comrades stood for a long time waving their hands to them from afar, though nothing could be seen. But when they returned to their places, when they perceived, by the light of the brightly gleaming stars, that half the carts were gone, and many, many of their comrades, then every man's heart grew sad; and all involuntarily became pensive, and their pleasure-loving heads drooped towards the earth.

Taras saw how troubled the kazáks had become, and that sadness, unfitting for brave men, had begun quietly to overmaster their heads; but he remained silent. He wished to give them all time to become accustomed to the melancholy caused by their parting from their comrades; but meantime, he was quietly preparing to arouse them suddenly, and all at once, by a loud war-whoop, in kazák fashion, in order that there might return

afresh, and with greater strength than before, to the soul of each, that valour of which only the Slav race — a broad and powerful race,— which is to others what the sea is to shallow rivers,— is capable. In stormy times it turns all to roaring and thunder, raging and raising such waves as weak rivers cannot throw up; but when it is windless and quiet, clearer than any river it spreads its boundless, glassy surface, a constant delight to the eye.

And Taras ordered his servitors to unload one of the wagons which stood apart from the rest. It was larger and stronger than any other in the kazák camp; stout, double tires encircled its huge wheels. It was heavily laden, covered with horse-cloths and strong wolf-skins, and firmly bound with tightly-drawn, tarred ropes. In the wagon were flasks and casks of good, old wine, which had lain long in Taras's cellars. He had brought it along as a reserve, to celebrate some occasion, in case a grand moment should arrive, when there awaited them some deed worthy of being handed down to posterity, so that each kazák, to the very last man, might quaff the forbidden liquor and be inspired with a grand sentiment befitting the grand moment. On receiving their Colonel's command the servants hastened to the wagon, hewed the stout

ropes with their swords, removed the thick wolf-skins and horse-cloths, and drew forth the flasks and casks.

"Take it, all of you," said Bulba, "all of you, no matter how many there are, take it in whatever you have, a ladle or a bucket for watering the horses; or your sleeve, or your cap; but if you have nothing else, then simply hold your two fists under."

And all the kazáks seized something: one took a ladle, another a horse-bucket, another a sleeve, another a cap, and still another held out both his hands. Taras's servants, making their way among the ranks, poured out for all, from the casks and flasks. But Taras ordered them not to drink until he should give the signal for all to drink together. It was evident that he wished to say something. Taras knew that, no matter how strong in itself the good old wine might be, and however fitted to strengthen the spirit of man, yet if a suitable speech were linked with it, then the strength of the wine and of the spirit would be doubly great.

"I treat you, sir brothers!" thus spoke Bulba, "not in honour of your having made me your atamán, great as that honour is, nor to celebrate our parting from our comrades. No; both these would be fitting at a different time, but not such is

the present moment. The work before us is great in labour, and in glory for the kazáks! Let us, therefore, comrades, drink all together,— let us drink, before all else, to the Holy Orthodox Faith, that the day may come, at last, when it may be spread over all the world, and that everywhere there may be but one Faith, and that all Mussulmans may become Christians! And let us drink also, all together, to the Syech, that it may stand long for the destruction of the Mussulmans, that each year there may issue forth from it young men, each better, each handsomer, than the other. And let us also drink, all together, to our own glory, that our grandsons and the sons of those grandsons may say that there once were men who were not ashamed of comradeship, and who never betrayed one another. Now — to the Faith, sir brothers, to the Faith!"

"To the Faith!" shouted, with thick voices, those who were standing in the near-by ranks. "To the Faith!" those more distant took up the cry,— and all, both young and old, drank to the Faith.

"To the Syech!" said Taras, raising his hand high above his head.

"To the Syech!" echoed the foremost ranks. "To the Syech!" said the old men softly, twitching their grey moustaches; and eagerly as young

hawks the youths repeated: "To the Syech!" And the distant plain heard how the kazáks commemorated their Syech.

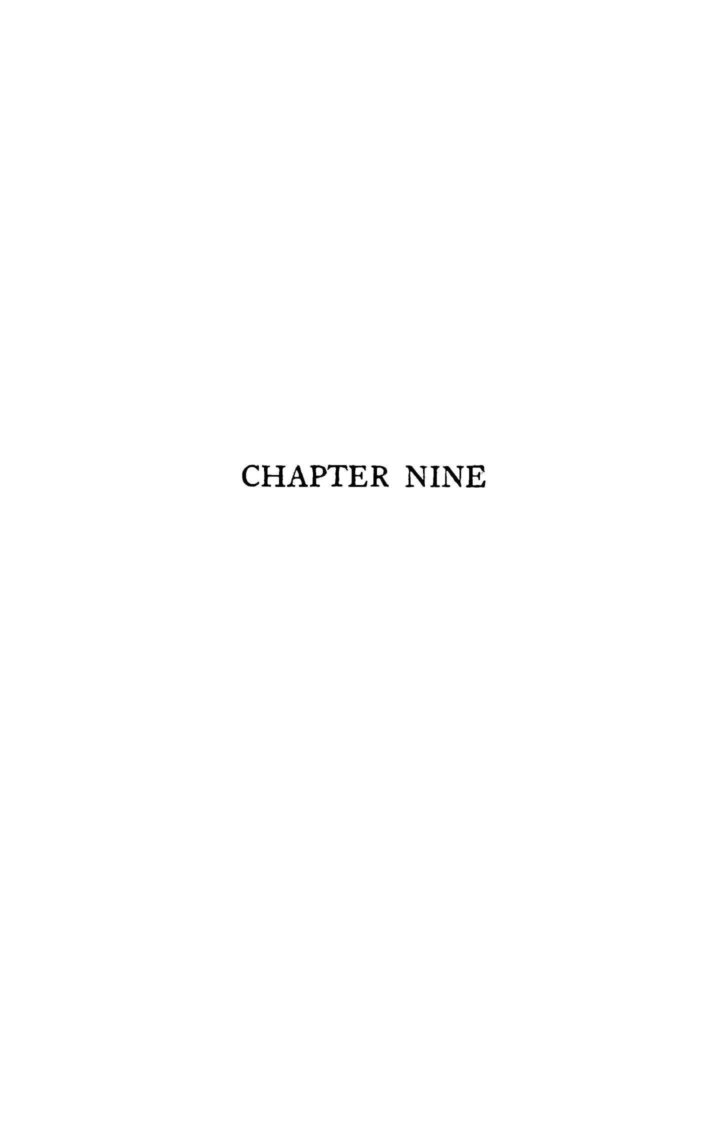
"Now, a last draught, comrades, to the glory of all Christians now living in the world!"

And every kazák drank a last draught to the glory of all Christians in the world. And among the ranks, in all the kuréns, they long repeated: "For all the Christians in the world!"

The ladles[1] were empty, but the kazáks still stood with their hands uplifted. Although the eyes of all gleamed cheerily with the liquor, all were thinking deeply. Not of greed or of the spoils of war were they thinking now, nor of which of them would be lucky enough to acquire ducats, fine weapons, embroidered kaftans and Cherkessian horses; but they were meditating like eagles perched upon the rocky crests of lofty, precipitous mountains, from which, far away, the boundless sea is visible, dotted, as with tiny birds, with galleys, ships, and every sort of vessel, confined at the sides by scarcely visible, thin lines of shore with their sea-coast cities like gnats, and their bending forests like short grass. Like eagles they gazed about them over all the plain, and at their Fate

[1] The *kovsh*, a vessel for drinking or for ladling liquids, resembles in form, somewhat, the old-fashioned porringer. I. F. H.

darkling in the distance. It will come, all the plain, with its waste lands and its road-tracks will be covered with their white, protruding bones, lavishly washed with their kazák blood, and strewn with shattered wagons and splintered swords and spears: far afield will be strewn the scalp-locked heads, with downward-drooping moustaches; the eagles will swoop down, and tear out their kazák eyes. But there is great good in this so widely and boldly broadcast bivouac of death! Not a single magnanimous deed will perish, and the kazák glory will not be lost, like a tiny grain of powder from a gun-barrel. He will come, the bandura-player with grey beard falling upon his breast will come, and perhaps the old man still full of ripe, manly strength, though his head is white with years, eloquent by the spirit, will utter ringing, mighty words of them. And their glory shall resound through all the world, and all who shall be born thereafter shall speak of them; for the word of power is borne afar, reverberating like a booming, brazen bell, in which the maker has mingled much pure silver, that its beautiful sound may be wafted far and wide through cities, huts, palaces and villages, summoning all men, without exception, to hold orisons.



CHAPTER NINE

IX

NO one in the city knew that one-half of the kazáks had gone in pursuit of the Tatárs. From the tower of the Magistracy all the sentinels observed was, that a part of the wagons had been dragged into the forest: but they thought the kazáks were preparing an ambush; so, also, thought the French engineer. Meanwhile, the Koshevói's words proved to be not devoid of foundation, and a scarcity of provisions arose in the city.

In accordance with the custom of past centuries, the troops did not separate as much as was necessary. They tried to make a sortie; but half the venturesome men were instantly slain by the kazáks, and the other half driven into the city with no result. But the Jews availed themselves of the opportunity to find out everything: whither and why the Zaporozhtzi had departed, and with what leaders, and which particular kuréns, and their number, and how many had remained on the spot, and what they intended to do: in short, within a few minutes, everything was known in the city.

The colonels took courage and prepared to offer

battle. Taras had already divined it by the noise and movement in the city, and toiled energetically, making his arrangements, forming his men into columns, issuing orders and instructions. He ranged the kuréns in three camps, surrounding them with the wagons, in the guise of bulwarks,— a form of battle in which the Zaporozhtzi were invincible. He ordered two kuréns into ambush; he drove sharp stakes, broken guns, fragments of spears, into a part of the plain, with a view to forcing the enemy's cavalry upon it, should an opportunity present itself. And when all was done that was needed, he made a speech to the kazáks, not for the purpose of encouraging and freshening up their spirits,— he knew that they were strong of soul without that,— but simply because he wished to tell them all he had in his heart.

"I want to tell you, sir brothers, what our brotherhood is. You have heard from your fathers and grandfathers in what honour our land has always been held by all men. We have made ourselves known to the Greeks, and we captured gold from Tzargrad,[1] and our cities were luxurious, and so were the temples and the Princes,— the Princes of the Russian people, our own Princes, not Catholic unbelievers. But the Mus-

[1] Tzargrad, i.e., Imperial City; the only Russian name for Constantinople. I. F. H.

sulmans took all, all vanished, and only we orphans remained, yea, like unto a widow after the death of a powerful husband: orphaned was our land, as well as ourselves! Such was the time, comrades, when we joined hands in a brotherhood: that is what our fellowship consists of! There is no bond more sacred than brotherhood. A father loves his children, a mother loves her children, the children love their father and their mother; but this is not like that, brethren! the wild beasts also love their young! But only men can enter into a relationship which is of the spirit and not of blood. There have been comrades in other lands, but never any such brotherhoods as on our Russian soil. It has happened to many of you to be lost for awhile in foreign lands. You look: there are people there, also! They, also, are God's creatures; and you talk with them as with the men of your own country. But when it comes to saying a heartfelt word — you see the difference. No! they're sensible folks, but not the right sort; the same kind of people, and yet not the same! No, brothers, to love as the Russian soul loves, is to love not with the mind or anything else, but with all that God has given you, all that is within you.— Ah!" said Taras, and waved his hand, shook his grey head, twitched his moustache, and then went on: "No, no one can love in that way!

I know that baseness has now made its way into our land. Men care only to possess ricks of grain and hay, and their droves of horses, and that their sealed mead may be untouched in their cellars; they adopt the Devil only knows what Mussulman customs. They abhor their own language. They care not to speak their real thoughts with their own countrymen. They sell their fellow-countrymen as they sell soulless creatures on the market-place. The favour of a foreign king — and not even of a king, but the grudging favour of a Polish magnate, who beats them on the mouth with his yellow shoe, is dearer to them than all brotherhood. But the very meanest scoundrel, whoever he may be, given over though he be to vileness and servility, even he, brothers, has at least a Russian feeling; and it will assert itself some day. And then the wretched man will beat the floor with his hands; and he will grasp his head in despair, loudly cursing his vile life, and ready to expiate his disgraceful deeds with torture. For they know, all of them, what brotherhood means on Russian soil! And if it has come to the point when such a man must die, not one of them will have the chance to die in the right way. No! Not one of them! 'Tis not a fitting thing for their mouse-like natures!" Thus spoke the Atamán; and after he had finished his speech, he still con-

tinued to shake his head, which had grown silver in kazák affairs. All who stood there were deeply affected by this speech, which went to their very hearts. The oldest in the ranks stood motionless, their grey heads drooping earthward: a tear gathered quietly in their aged eyes; they slowly wiped it away with their sleeve, and then all, as with one consent, waved their hands in the air at the same moment, and shook their experienced heads. For it was evident that Taras had reminded them of many of the best-known and finest points of the heart in a man who has become wise through suffering, toil, daring, and every earthly misfortune, or, though unknown to them, of many things felt by young, pearly spirits, to the eternal joy of the parents who bore them.

But the enemy's troops were already marching out of the city, to the thunder of kettledrums and trumpets; and the noble lords, with arms akimbo, rode forth surrounded by innumerable retinues. The fat Colonel was giving orders. And they began to advance briskly on the kazák camps, threateningly aiming their arquebuses, with eyes flashing and brazen armour glittering. As soon as the kazáks perceived that they had arrived within gunshot, they let fly all together with their seven-palm arquebuses, and continued to fire without cessation.

The heavy detonations resounded through the distant fields and meadows, merging into one continuous roar. The whole plain was shrouded in smoke, but the Zaporozhtzi went on firing without stopping to draw breath: the rear ranks did nothing but load and hand to those in front, creating amazement among the enemy who could not understand how the kazáks fired without loading their guns. Amid the dense smoke which enveloped both armies, it could no longer be seen how one and another dropped out of the ranks: but the Lyakhs felt that the bullets were flying thickly, and that the engagement was growing hot: and when they retreated to escape from the smoke and to take an observation, many were missing from the ranks, but only two or three out of a company had been killed on the kazák side. And still the kazáks went on firing their arquebuses without a moment's intermission. Even the foreign engineer was amazed at tactics heretofore unknown to him, and said, then and there, in the presence of all, "Those Zaporozhtzi are brave lads. That's the way men in other lands ought to fight." And he advised that the cannon should immediately be trained on the camps. Heavily roared the iron cannon, with their wide throats; the earth hummed and trembled far and wide, and the smoke lay twice as heavy over the plain. The reek of the

powder could be smelled among the squares and streets in the most distant as well as the nearest quarters of the city. But those who aimed the cannon pointed them too high; the hot shot described too large a curve; screaming horribly they flew over the heads of the whole camp, and buried themselves deep in the earth at a distance, tearing up the ground and throwing the black dirt high in the air. At the sight of such lack of skill, the French engineer tore his hair, and undertook to point the cannon himself, heeding not the kazák bullets which burned and showered around him.

Taras saw from afar that the whole Nezamaikovsky and Steblikivsky kuréns were threatened with destruction, and uttered a ringing shout: "Get away instantly from behind the wagons, and mount your horses!" But the kazáks would not have succeeded in effecting these two movements had not Ostap dashed into the midst of the enemy, and wrenched the lunts from six cannoneers. But he was unable to wrench them from the remaining four: the Lyakhs drove him back. Meanwhile the foreign Captain had taken a lunt in his own hand, to fire off the largest of the cannon — such a cannon as none of the kazáks had ever beheld before. It looked horrible, with its wide mouth, and a thousand deaths peered forth from it. And as it thundered, the three others followed, shak-

ing in fourfold earthquake the dully responsive earth,— and much woe did they cause. For more than one kazák wails an aged mother, beating with bony hands her feeble breast; more than one widow will be left in Glukhov, Nemirov, Chernigov, and other towns. Every day will the loving woman hasten forth to the bazaar, catching at all passers-by, scanning the face of each to see if there be not among them one dearer than all; but many troops of all sorts will pass through the town, yet never among them will appear the single one who is dearest of all to her.

And half the Nezamaikovsky kurén was as though it had never been! As hail suddenly beats down a field where every ear of grain shines like a ducat of full weight, so were they beaten down.

How hastened the kazáks thither! how they all started up! How raged the atamán of the kurén, Kukubenko, when he saw that the best half of his kurén was no more! He fought his way, with his remaining Nezamaikovtzi, to the very heart of the fray, hewed down, in his wrath, like a cabbage, the first man he encountered, hurled many a rider from his horse, impaling both horse and rider with his spear; made his way to the gunners and captured a cannon; but there he beheld the atamán of the Umansky kurén and Stepan Guska hard at work, having already seized the chief cannon. He left

those kazáks there, and returned with his own to another group of the foe: and where the Nezamaikovtzi went there was a street! where they wheeled about there was a lane! And the ranks were visibly thinning, and the Lyakhs were falling in sheaves! And right beside the wagons was Vovtuzenko, and in front Cherevichenko, and by the more distant one Degtyarenko; and behind them was the atamán of the kurén, Vertykvist. Degtyarenko already had raised two Lyakhs upon his spear, and was now attacking the third, a stubborn fellow. Agile and strong was the Lyakh, with gorgeous accoutrements, and he was accompanied by fifty servitors. He fell fiercely upon Degtyarenko, beat him to the ground and, flourishing his sword above him, cried, "There's not one of you kazák dogs who would dare to oppose me!"

"Here's one!" said Mosii Shilo, stepping forward. He was a muscular kazák, who had often served as atamán on the sea, and had undergone many vicissitudes. The Turks had captured him and his men at Trebizond, and thrown them all, captives, into the galleys; they bound them hand and foot with iron chains, gave them no millet for a week at a time, and made them drink the repulsive sea water. The poor prisoners bore and suffered all things, if only they might not be forced to renounce their Orthodox Faith. Atamán Mosii

Shilo could not endure it: he trampled under foot the Holy Scriptures, wound a vile turban about his sinful head, won the confidence of a Pasha, became steward on a ship, and ruler over all the slaves. The poor prisoners sorrowed greatly thereat, for they knew that if he had betrayed his Faith he would become a tyrant, and his hand would be the more severe and heavy on them; and so it turned out. Mosii Shilo had them all put in new chains, three in a row, and twisted the cruel cords until they cut clean to the bone; and he beat them upon the back of the neck, regaling them with cuffs for their napes. And when the Turks rejoiced at having obtained such a servant, and began to carouse, and, forgetful of their law, all got drunk, he distributed all the sixty-four keys among the prisoners, in order that they might free themselves, fling their chains and manacles into the sea, and, seizing their swords, in their turn slay the Turks. Then did the kazáks collect great booty, and return with glory to their country; and the bandura-players glorified Mosii Shilo for a very long time. The men would have elected him Koshevói, but he was a very peculiar kazák. At one time he would perform some feat which the most sagacious never would have dreamed of; and at another, folly simply took possession of him. He drank away and squandered away everything,

was in debt to every one in the Syech, and stole like a common street thief, to boot. He carried off a complete kazák equipment from another kurén, by night, and pawned it to a dram-shop keeper. For this dishonourable act they bound him to a post in the bazaar, and laid a club by his side, so that every one, according to the measure of his strength, might deal him a blow. But there was not one Zaporozhetz out of them all to be found who would raise the club against him, remembering his former services. Such was the kazák, Mosii Shilo.

"Here are some who will kill you, you dog!" he said, springing upon him. And how they hacked away! their shoulder-plates and breast-plates bent beneath the blows. The hostile Lyakh cut through his shirt of mail, reaching the body itself with his sharp blade; the kazák's shirt was dyed crimson; but Shilo heeded it not, flourished his muscular hand (heavy was that mighty fist), and brought it down unexpectedly on his head. The brazen helmet flew off, the Lyakh reeled and fell; but Shilo went on hacking and making crosses on the stunned man. Kill not utterly thine enemy, kazák! turn back rather! The kazák turned not, and one of the dead man's servitors plunged a knife into his neck. Shilo turned, and almost succeeded in seizing the daring man, but he

disappeared amid the smoke of the powder. On all sides rose the clash of arquebuses. Shilo reeled, and knew that his wound was mortal. He fell, with his hand upon his wound, and said, turning to his comrades: "Farewell, sir brothers, my comrades! May the holy Russian land stand forever, and may it have eternal honour!" Then he closed his failing eyes, and the kazák soul took flight from the grim body. And then Zadorozhny came forward with his men, Vertykhvist broke the ranks, and Balaban stepped forward.

"What now, noble sirs?" said Taras, calling to the atamáns by name: "is there yet powder in the powder-flasks? The kazák force is not weakened, is it? The kazáks do not yield?"

"There is yet powder in the flasks, *batko;* the kazák force is not yet weakened; the kazáks do not yield!"

And the kazáks pressed vigorously on: the ranks were all in confusion. The little colonel had the assembly beaten, and ordered eight painted standards to be flung out, to collect his men, who were scattered far over all the plain. All the Lyakhs hastened to the standards. But they had not yet succeeded in ranging themselves in order, when Atamán Kukubenko attacked again with his Nezamaikovtzi, in their centre, and fell

straight upon the big-bellied colonel. The colonel could not withstand the attack and, wheeling his horse about, set out at a gallop; but Kukubenko pursued him for a long distance, all over the plain, and prevented him from joining his regiment.

Perceiving this from the kurén on the flank, Stepan Guska set out after him, lasso in hand, bending his head to his horse's neck, and taking advantage of an opportunity, with one cast he landed the lasso about his neck: the colonel turned purple in the face, grasped the cord with both hands, and tried to break it; but a powerful blow drove a lance through his body. And there he remained, pinned to the earth. But things turned out badly for Guska! Before the kazáks had time to look about them, they beheld Stepan Guska elevated on four spears. All the poor fellow succeeded in saying was, "May all our enemies perish, and may the Russian land rejoice forever!" and then he yielded up his spirit.

The kazáks glanced around, and there was kazák Meteltzya on one side, entertaining the Lyakhs, dealing blows on the head to one and another; and on the other side, Atamán Nevylychky was attacking with his men; and Zakrutybuga was turning and slaying the foe near the transports; and the third Pisarenko had repulsed a whole

squadron from the more distant wagons; and they were still fighting and killing round the other wagons, and even upon them.

"How now, noble sirs!" cried Atamán Taras, stepping forward before them all: "is there still powder in your flasks? Is the kazák force still strong? do not the kazáks yield?"

"There is still powder in our flasks, *batko;* the kazák force is still strong; the kazáks do not yield!"

But Bovdyug had already toppled off one of the wagons; a bullet had struck him straight under the heart. The old man collected all his strength, and said: "I sorrow not at parting with this world! God grant to every man such an end! May the Russian land be forever glorious!" and Bovdyug's spirit soared on high, to tell the old men who had gone on long before that men still knew how to fight on Russian soil, and, better still, that they knew how to die for it and for the holy Faith.

Balaban, atamán of a kurén, soon after fell to the ground, also from a wagon. Three mortal wounds had he received, from a spear, a bullet, and a sword. He had been one of the most valorous of the kazáks, and had accomplished a great deal during his atamánship, in expeditions on the sea; but more glorious than all the rest was his expedition to the shores of Anatolia. There

they had collected many sequins, much valuable Turkish property, kaftans and adornments of every description. But misfortune awaited them on their way back: the gallant fellows fell under the fire of the Turks. How they caught it from the ship! Half the boats were crushed, and overturned, drowning many a one; but the reeds bound to the sides saved the boats from sinking. Balaban rowed off at full speed, and stood straight in the face of the sun, thus rendering himself invisible to the Turkish ship. All the following night they spent in bailing out the water with scoops and their caps, and in repairing the damaged places. They cut sails from their full kazák trousers and, sailing off, escaped from the very swift Turkish vessel. And not only did they arrive unharmed in the Syech, but they brought a gold-embroidered vestment to the Archimandrite [1] of the Mezhigorsky Monastery in Kiev; and for the church in honour of the Intercession of the Holy Virgin, which is in Zaporozhe, an ikóna-frame of pure silver. And for a very long time afterwards did the bandura-players celebrate the daring of the kazáks. Now he bowed his head, feeling the pains which precede death, and said quietly: "It seems to me, sir brothers, that I am dying a fine death. Seven have I hewn in pieces, nine have I transfixed with my

[1] Abbot. I. F. H.

spear, and many have I trampled under my horse's hoofs; and I no longer remember how many my bullets have slain. May our Russian land flourish forever! " and his spirit fled.

Kazáks, kazáks! surrender not the flower of your army. Already was Kukubenko surrounded, and seven men only remained out of all the Nezamaikovsky kurén, and these had already defended themselves beyond their strength; their garments were already stained with blood. Taras himself, perceiving his straits, hastened to his rescue; but the kazáks arrived too late. Before the enemies who surrounded him could be driven off, a spear was buried just below his heart. Quietly he sank into the arms of the kazáks who grasped him, and his young blood flowed in a stream, like precious wine brought from the cellar in a glass vessel by careless servants who, stumbling at the entrance, break the rich flask: the wine pours over the ground, and the master, hastening up, tears his hair, having reserved it for the best occasion of his life, in order that, if God should grant him, in his old age, to meet again the comrade of his youth, they might recall together days gone by, when men revelled otherwise and better than now. Kukubenko turned his eyes about, and said, " I thank God that it has been my lot to die before your eyes, comrades. May those who come after

us live better than we have lived; and may our Russian land, beloved of Christ, flourish for-ever!" and his young spirit fled. Angels took it, and, supporting it by the arms,[1] bore it to heaven: there it will be well with him. "Sit down at my right hand, Kukubenko," Christ will say to him: "you never betrayed your comrades, you never committed a dishonourable act, you never sold a man into misery, you preserved and defended My Church!"

The death of Kukubenko saddened them all. The kazák ranks were already terribly thinned; many brave men were missing, but the kazáks still held their ground.

"How now, sir brothers!" cried Taras to the remaining kuréns: "is there still powder in your flasks? Your swords are not yet dulled? Are the kazák forces weary? Have the kazáks given way?"

"There is still plenty of powder, *batko;* our swords are still fit; the kazák forces are not weary, and the kazáks have not yielded."

And again the kazáks strained every nerve, as though they had suffered no losses whatsoever. Only three kurén atamáns still remained alive.

[1] Archbishops and Bishops are ceremonially supported by a priest or an acolyte on each side, who hold them by the elbow when ascending steps during a service. I. F. H.

Their red blood flowed everywhere in crimson streams; kazák corpses, and those of the enemy, were piled high in layers. Taras looked up to the sky, and there, already, was outstretched a long file of vultures. Well, there will be booty for some one. And yonder they were raising Meteltzya on their spears and the head of the second Pisarenko, as it went spinning round, opened and shut its eyes; and the mangled body of Okhrim Guska broke apart, and fell upon the ground in four pieces. "Now!" said Taras, and waved a kerchief. Ostap understood the signal, and dashing quickly from his ambush, attacked sharply. The Lyakhs could not withstand this violent onslaught; and he drove them back, chasing them straight to the spot where the stakes and fragments of spears were embedded in the earth. The horses began to stumble and fall, and the Lyakhs to fly over their heads. At that moment, the Korsuntzy, who had remained until the last behind the transport-wagons, perceived that they still had some bullets left, and suddenly fired off their arquebuses. The Lyakhs all fell into confusion, and lost their presence of mind; and the kazáks took courage. "Here's our victory!" rang out kazák voices on all sides; the trumpets began to blare, and the standard of victory was unfurled. The defeated Lyakhs dispersed in all directions, and hid them-

selves. "No, the victory is not yet complete!" said Taras, glancing at the city gate; and he was right.

The gate opened, and out dashed a hussar regiment, the pride of all the cavalry troops. Every rider was mounted on a matched bay race-horse from Kabarda; in front of the rest rode the handsomest, the most heroic warrior of them all; his black locks streamed from beneath his brazen helmet; a rich scarf, embroidered by the hands of a peerless beauty, was bound about his arm. Taras sprang back in horror when he saw that it was Andríi. And he, meanwhile, enveloped in the dust and heat of battle, anxious to deserve the scarf which had been bound, as a gift, on his arm, flew on like a young greyhound; the handsomest, swiftest and youngest of all the troop. The experienced huntsman halloos on the greyhound, which leaps forward, its legs cutting a straight line in the air, its body slanted all on one side, tossing up the snow, and a score of times outrunning the hare in the ardour of the course. And Andríi was precisely like this. Old Taras paused and observed how he cleared a path before him, dispersing, hewing and distributing blows to right and left. Taras could not restrain himself from shouting, "What? Your own comrades? Your own comrades! You devil's brat, do you slay

your own comrades?" But Andríi did not distinguish who stood before him, his comrades or strangers: he saw nothing. Curls, long, long curls were what he saw; and a bosom like that of a river swan, and a snowy neck and shoulders, and all that is created for wild kisses.

"Hey there, my lads! just lure him to the forest! Entice him to the forest for me!" shouted Taras. And instantly thirty of the smartest kazáks volunteered to entice him thither, and settling their tall caps firmly, they spurred their horses straight at a gap in the hussars. They attacked the front ranks from the flank, beat them down, separated them from the rear ranks, distributing a gift to one and another; but Golokopytenko struck Andríi on the back with his sword, and then immediately rode away from the hussars at the top of his speed. How furiously Andríi raged! How his young blood rebelled in his veins! Driving his sharp spurs into his horse's flanks, he flew at top speed after the kazák, never glancing back and not perceiving that only twenty men, at most, were following him; but the kazáks fled at full gallop, and directed their course straight for the forest. Andríi overtook them and was on the point of catching Golokopytenko, when a powerful hand grasped his horse's bridle. Andríi looked: before him stood Taras! He be-

gan to tremble all over, and suddenly turned pale, like a student who has incautiously teased his comrade to excess, and receiving, in consequence, a blow on the forehead with a ruler, flushes up like fire, springs up in wrath from the bench, to chase his frightened comrade, prepared to tear him in pieces, and suddenly encounters his teacher entering the class-room: in an instant his wrathful impulse calms down, and his futile anger vanishes. In such wise, in one instant, Andríi's wrath was as though it had never existed. And he beheld nothing save only his terrible father, standing before him.

"Well, what are we going to do now?" said Taras, looking him straight in the eye. But Andríi could make no reply to this, and sat there with his eyes rivetted on the ground.

"Well, little son! Did your Lyakhs help you?"

Andríi did not answer.

"You'll be such a traitor, will you? You'll betray your Faith in this fashion? betray your comrades? Hold on, there, dismount from your horse!"

Obedient as a child, he dismounted, and stood before Taras more dead than alive. "Stand still, don't move! I gave you life, I will also kill you!" said Taras, and, retreating a pace, he brought his

gun up to his shoulder. Andríi was white as linen: his lips could be seen to move softly, and he uttered a name; but it was not the name of his native land, or of his mother, or of his brethren; it was the name of the beautiful Pole. Taras fired.

Like an ear of corn cut down by the reaping-hook, like a young limb when it feels the deadly steel in its heart, he hung his head and rolled upon the grass without uttering a word.

The murderer of his son stood and gazed long upon the lifeless body. Even in death he was very handsome: his manly face, so short a time ago filled with power, and irresistible charm for every woman, still breathed forth marvellous beauty; his black brows, like sombre velvet, set off his pale features.

"In what way wasn't he a genuine kazák?" said Taras: "he's tall of stature, and black-browed, and his face is that of a nobleman, and his hand was strong in battle! He has fallen, fallen ingloriously, like a vile dog!"

"Father, what have you done? Was it you who killed him?" said Ostap, riding up at this moment.

Taras nodded.

Ostap gazed intently at the dead man. He felt sorry for his brother, and said, at once: "Let's

give him an honourable burial, Father, that the foe may not dishonour his body, nor the birds of prey rend it."

"They'll bury him without any help from us!" said Taras: "there'll be plenty of mourners and comforters for him!"

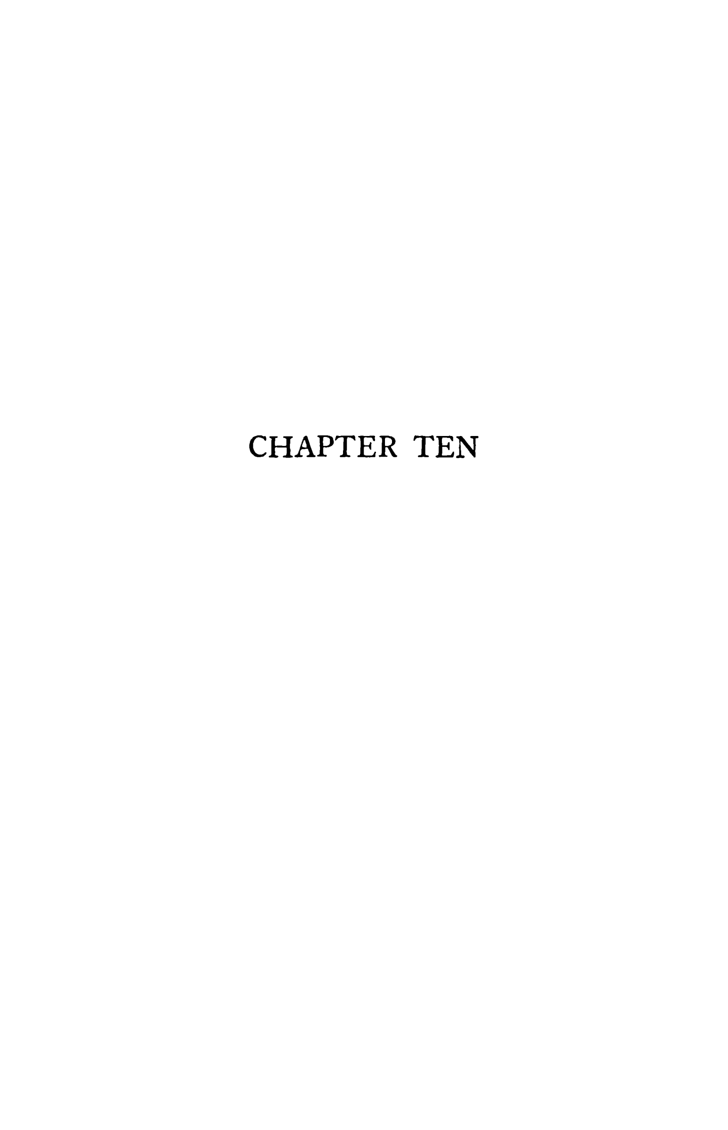
And he reflected for a couple of minutes: should he fling him to the fierce wolves for their prey, or respect in him the knightly valour which every brave man is bound to honour in another, no matter who the man may be? Then he espied Golokopytenko galloping towards them: "Disaster, atamán! the Lyakhs have been reinforced, a fresh force has come to their rescue!" Golokopytenko had not finished speaking when Vovtuzenko dashed up: "Disaster, atamán! a fresh force is bearing down upon us!"

Vovtuzenko had not finished speaking when Pisarenko rushed up without his horse: "Where are you, *batko?* The kazáks are looking for you. Atamán Nevylychky is killed, Zadorozhny is killed, and so is Cherevichenko: but the kazáks are still standing their ground; they do not wish to die without having seen you; they want you to gaze upon them once more before the hour of death arrives!"

"To horse, Ostap!" said Taras, and hastened in search of his kazáks, to look once more upon

them, and let them once more behold their atamán before the hour of death. But before they could emerge from the forest, the enemy's forces had already surrounded it on all sides, and horsemen armed with swords and spears appeared everywhere among the trees. "Ostap, Ostap! don't surrender!" shouted Taras, and grasping his naked sword, he began to cut down all he encountered on every side. But six had already sprung upon Ostap. ('Twas an unpropitious hour for them! the head of one flew off, another toppled over, a spear pierced the ribs of a third; a fourth, more bold, bent his head to escape from a bullet, and the hot bullet struck his horse in the breast; — the maddened animal reared, fell back upon the earth, and crushed his rider under him.) "Well done, son! Well done, Ostap!" shouted Taras: "I'm following you!" And he beat off all who attacked him. Taras hewed and fought, dealing blows upon the head of one after another, still keeping his eye upon Ostap ahead of him; and he saw that eight more were falling upon Ostap. "Ostap, Ostap! don't surrender!" But already they had overpowered Ostap; one had flung his lasso around his neck, and they had bound him, and were carrying him away. "Hey, Ostap, Ostap!" shouted Taras, forcing his way to him, and cutting down men, as though they had been

cabbages, to right and left. "Hey, Ostap, Ostap!" But at that moment something struck him like a heavy stone: everything grew dim and confused before his eyes. For a moment there flashed before him confusedly heads, spears, smoke, flashes of fire, tree-stumps with their leaves. And he sank heavily to the earth, like a felled oak. And darkness covered his eyes.



CHAPTER TEN

X

"WELL, I've had a long sleep!" said Taras, coming to his senses as if after a heavy, drunken slumber, and trying to distinguish the objects about him. A terrible weakness overpowered his limbs. The walls and corners of a strange room appeared dimly to his vision. At last he perceived Tovkach seated before him, apparently listening to his every breath.

"Yes," thought Tovkach, "you might have slept forever." But he said nothing, shook his finger and motioned Taras to keep quiet.

"But tell me, where am I now?" asked Taras, straining his mind, and endeavouring to recollect what had happened.

"Hold your tongue!" cried his companion roughly. "Why should you want to know? Don't you see that you're all hacked to pieces? Here I've been galloping with you for two weeks, without stopping to take breath; and all the while you've been burning up with fever, and jabbering nonsense. This is the first time you've slept quietly. Be silent, if you don't wish to do yourself an injury!"

But Taras still strove to collect his thoughts, and to recall what had taken place. "Well, but the Lyakhs must have surrounded me completely, and captured me? I hadn't a chance to fight myself free from the mob?"

"Hold your tongue! I tell you, you devil's brat!" shouted Tovkach angrily, as a nurse, driven beyond her patience, cries out at her naughty, fractious young charge. "What good will it do you to know how you got away? It's enough that you did get away. Some people were found who didn't betray you. That's enough for you to know! You and I must still gallop on together for many a night! Think you that you are accounted a common kazák? No, they have offered a reward of two thousand ducats for your head."

"And Ostap!" cried Taras suddenly, making a tremendous effort to rise; and then, all at once, he recollected that Ostap had been seized and bound before his very eyes, and that he was now in the hands of the Lyakhs. And grief overpowered his aged head. He tugged at his bandages, and tore them all from his wounds; he threw them far from him; he tried to say something aloud — and uttered something incoherent. Fever and delirium took possession of him afresh, and he chattered foolish speeches, devoid of rhyme or reason.

Meanwhile his faithful comrade stood before him cursing and showering harsh, reproachful words upon him, without stint. Finally he seized him by the arms and legs, swaddled him like a baby, replaced all his bandages, rolled him up in an ox-hide, bound him with linden-bast, and fastening him with ropes to his saddle, dashed off with him again, at full speed, along the road.

"I'll get you there, even if not alive! I'll not abandon you for the Lyakhs to make mock at your kazák race, and rend your body in twain, and fling it into the water. Let the eagles claw your eyes from your brow, if so it must be; but let it be our own eagle of the steppe, and not a Polish eagle, not one which has flown hither from Polish soil. I'll bring you, though it be a corpse, to the Ukraina!"

Thus spoke his faithful comrade. He galloped on, without drawing breath, day and night, and brought him, insensible, into the Zaporozhian Syech itself. There he undertook to heal him, with unwearied care, with herbs and liniments. He sought out a skilful Jewess: she made Taras drink various potions for a whole month, and at last he began to improve. Whether it was owing to the medicine, or to his iron constitution gaining the upper hand, at any rate, in six weeks he was on his feet again; his wounds had closed, and only the

scars of the sabre-cuts showed how seriously injured the old kazák had been. But he had become markedly sad and morose. Three deep wrinkles had engraved themselves upon his brow, and never more departed thence. Then he looked about him: all was new in the Syech; all his old comrades were dead. Not one was left of those who had defended the right, the Faith, and brotherhood. And as for those who had fared forth with the Koshevói in pursuit of the Tatárs, they, also, had died long since: all had laid down their heads: all had perished. One had lost his honourable head in battle, another had died for lack of bread and water, amid the salt marshes of the Crimea; another had disappeared in captivity, unable to endure the disgrace, and even their former Koshevói was long since dead, and so were all old comrades, and the seething kazák power was overgrown with grass. He heard only that there had been a feast, a noisy, strenuous feast. All the dishes had been smashed to bits: not a drop of liquor was left anywhere; the guests and servants had stolen all the valuable cups and platters,—and the master of the house stood sadly thinking that it would have been better had there been no feast. In vain did they try to cheer Taras, and to divert his mind; in vain did the long-bearded, grey-haired bandura-players, passing by in twos and

threes, glorify his kazák deeds. He gazed grimly and indifferently at everything, and on his stolid face sorrow unquenchable stood forth; and he said softly, " My son, my Ostap! "

The Zaporozhtzi assembled for an expedition by sea. Two hundred boats were launched on the Dnyeper, and Asia Minor saw the kazáks, with their shaven heads and long scalp-locks, devote her thriving shores to fire and sword; she saw the turbans of her Mahometan inhabitants strewn, like her innumerable flowers, over the blood-besprinkled fields, and floating along her banks. She beheld many tarry Zaporozhian trousers, and muscular hands with black hunting-whips. The Zaporozhtzi ate up and laid waste all their vineyard. In her mosques they left heaps of dung. They used rich Persian shawls for trouser-belts, and girded their dirty doublets with them. For a long time afterwards short Zaporozhian pipes were found in those regions. Then they sailed merrily homeward again. A ten-gun Turkish vessel pursued them and scattered their fragile skiffs like birds, with a volley from its guns. A third part of them sank in the depths of the sea; but the rest assembled again, and gained the mouth of the Dnyeper with twelve kegs full of sequins. But all this had no interest for Taras. He went off upon the fields and the steppe as though to hunt; but the

charge remained unfired, in his gun, and, laying down the weapon, he sat sadly on the seashore. He sat there long, with drooping head, repeating continually, "My Ostap, my Ostap!" Before him spread the gleaming Black Sea; in the distant reeds the sea-gulls screamed. His grey moustache turned to silver, and the tears chased one another down his cheeks.

At last Taras could endure it no longer. "Whatever happens, I must go and find out what he is doing. Is he alive, or in the grave? or is he not yet in the grave? Know I will, cost what it may!" And within a week he was in the town of Uman, mounted, fully armed with spear, sword, a flat travelling-cask at his saddle-bow, his pot of oatmeal, his cartridges, cord to hobble his horse, and other accoutrements. He rode straight to a dirty, bedaubed little house, whose tiny windows were almost invisible, blackened as they were with some unknown dirt; the chimney was plugged with a rag; and the roof, which was full of holes, was covered with sparrows; a heap of all sorts of refuse lay before the very door. From the window peered the head of a Jewess, in a headdress with discoloured pearls.

"Is your husband at home?" asked Bulba, dismounting, and fastening his horse's bridle to an iron hook beside the door.

"Yes," said the Jewess, and hastened out immediately with a little trough of wheat for the horse, and a stoup of beer for the rider.

"Where's your Jew?"

"In the other room, at prayer," replied the Jewess, bowing and wishing Bulba good health, as he raised the drinking-cup to his lips.

"Remain here and feed and water my horse, and I'll go and speak with him alone. I have business with him."

This Jew was that Yankel, already known to us. He was there as a revenue-farmer and dram-shop keeper. He had gradually got all the neighbouring noblemen and gentry into his clutches, had slowly sucked away most of their money, had made his presence severely felt in that region. For a distance of three miles in every direction not a single cottage remained in a proper condition. All were falling in ruins; all had been drunk away, and rags and poverty alone remained; the whole neighbourhood was devastated as if after a fire or an epidemic. And if Yankel had lived there ten years, he would, probably, have depopulated the Voevod's entire domain.

Taras entered the room. The Jew was praying, wrapped in his dirty scarf, and was turning to spit for the last time, in accordance with the forms of his creed, when his eye suddenly alighted upon

Taras standing behind him. And the very first thing of all, which struck the Jew full in the face, was the recollection of the two thousand ducats offered for his head; but he was ashamed of his avarice, and tried to stifle within him the eternal thought of gold, which twines like a worm about the soul of a Jew.

"Hearken to me, Yankel!" said Taras to the Jew, who began to bow low before him, and he shut the door so that they might not be seen. "I saved your life: the Zaporozhtzi were ready to tear you in pieces, like a dog. Now it's your turn to do me a service."

The Jew's face contracted a bit.

"What service? If it's a service I can render, why not render it?"

"Don't give me any talk! Take me to Warsaw."

"To Warsaw? Why to Warsaw?" said the Jew, and his brows and shoulders rose in amazement.

"Don't answer back. Take me to Warsaw. I must see him once more, at any cost, and say at least one word to him."

"Say a word to whom?"

"To him — to Ostap — to my son."

"Has not the noble lord heard that already —"

"I know, I know all: they offer two thousand ducats for my head. They know its value, the fools! I'll give you five thousand. Here are two thousand on the spot" (Bulba poured out two thousand ducats from a leather bag), "and the rest you shall have when I return."

The Jew instantly seized a towel and concealed the ducats under it. "Aï, glorious money! Aï, good money!" he said, twirling one of the gold pieces in his hand, and testing it with his teeth. "I don't believe the man from whom the noble lord stole these fine gold pieces remained in the world an hour longer; he went straight to the river and drowned himself after the loss of such magnificent pieces.

"I wouldn't have asked you; I might, possibly, have found my own way to Warsaw, but some one might recognise me, and then the cursed Lyakhs would capture me, for I'm not clever at making up plausible stories; but that's just what you Jews are created for. You'd deceive the very Devil: you know all the tricks; that's why I have come to you! And, besides, I couldn't accomplish anything in Warsaw by myself. Harness up your cart instantly, and drive me to Warsaw."

"And does the noble lord think that I can take the mare so, out of hand, and harness her, and —

'Get up, Dapple'? Does the noble lord think that I can take the noble lord just as he is, without hiding him?"

"Well, hide me, then, hide me any way you like: how would a powder-cask answer?"

"Aï, aï! and the noble lord thinks, perhaps, that he can be concealed in a powder-cask? Doesn't the noble lord know that every man thinks every cask contains corn-brandy?"

"Well, let 'em think it's brandy!"

"What! Let them think it's brandy?" said the Jew, grasping his earlocks with both hands, then throwing up his arms.

"Well, and why are you so frightened?"

"And doesn't the noble lord know that God has made brandy expressly for every one to taste? They're all gluttons and fond of dainties there: a Polish noble will run five versts after a cask; he'll bore a hole, and as soon as he sees that nothing runs out, he'll say, 'The Jew isn't carrying a powder-cask; there's certainly something wrong here! Seize the Jew, bind the Jew, take away all the Jew's money; put the Jew in prison!' Because everything that is evil is blamed on the Jew, and every one takes a Jew for a dog; and they think he's not a man, because he's a Jew."

"Then lay me in the wagon with a load of fish."

"It can't be done, noble sir, it can't be done: all

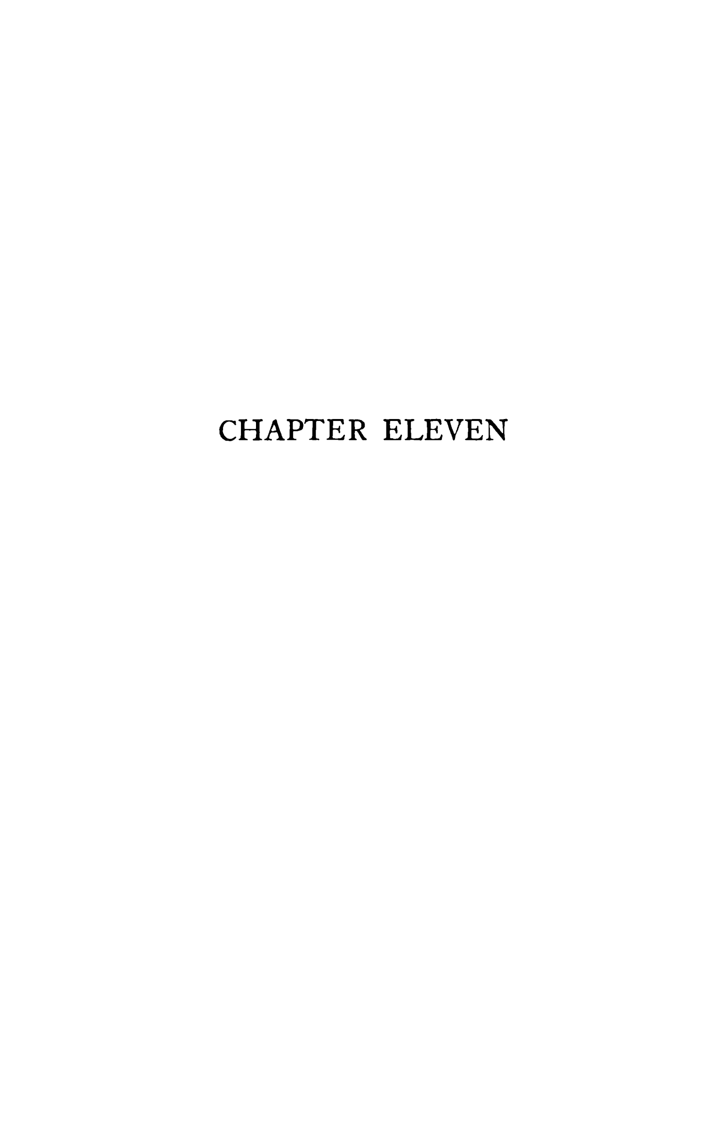
over Poland the people are as hungry as dogs now. They'll steal the fish, and feel the noble lord."

"Then take me in any devil's way you like, only take me."

"Listen, listen, noble sir!" said the Jew, stripping up the cuffs of his sleeves, and approaching him with arms outstretched. "This is what we'll do.—They're building fortresses and castles everywhere: French engineers have come from Germany, and so a great deal of brick and stone is being carted over the highways. Let the noble lord lie down in the bottom of the wagon, and over him I will pile bricks. The noble lord is strong and well, apparently, so he will not mind if it is a little heavy; and I will make a hole in the bottom of the wagon, so that I can feed the noble lord."

"Do what you will, only take me!"

And in an hour, a wagon-load of bricks left Uman, drawn by two sorry nags. On one of them sat tall Yankel; and his long, curling earlocks fluttered from beneath his Jewish cap of felt, as, long as a verst-post planted by the roadside, he bounced about on the horse.



CHAPTER ELEVEN

XI

AT the time when the above-described incidents took place, there were, as yet, in the frontier settlements, no custom-house officials and guards,— those terrible menaces to enterprising people,— therefore, any one could bring across anything he liked. If any one made any search or inspection, he did it chiefly for his own pleasure, especially if there happened to be in the wagon objects attractive to the eye, and if his own hand possessed a certain weight and power. But the bricks found no admirers, and they entered the principal gate of the city unmolested. Bulba, in his narrow cage, could only hear the noise, the shouts of the drivers, and nothing more. Yankel, bouncing away on his short, dust-covered trotter, turned, after taking several circuitous bends, into a dark, narrow street bearing the name of "The Muddy" and also of "the Jews' Street," because, as a matter of fact, Jews from nearly every quarter of Warsaw were to be found there. This street greatly resembled a back-yard turned wrongside out. The sun, apparently, never shone in there. The totally black wooden houses, with innumerable

poles projecting from the windows, still further increased the gloom. Rarely did the brick wall gleam red among them; for it also, in many places, had turned quite black. Here and there, high up, a bit of stuccoed wall lighted by the sun, shone with a whiteness intolerable to the eye. Everything there was extremely harsh; pipes, rags, shells, broken and discarded tubs. Every one flung into the street whatever was useless to him, thus affording the passer-by an opportunity to regale all his senses with the rubbish. A man on horseback could almost touch with his hand the poles thrown across the street from one house to another, upon which hung Jewish stockings, short trousers, and smoked geese. Sometimes the rather pretty face of a Jewess, adorned with blackened pearls, peeped out of an ancient window. A mob of Jew urchins, with torn and dirty garments and curly hair, screamed and rolled about in the mud. A red-haired Jew, with freckles all over his face, which made him look like a sparrow's egg, was gazing out of a window; he instantly accosted Yankel in his unintelligible jargon, and Yankel immediately drove into the court-yard. Another Jew, who was coming along the street, halted and entered into conversation, and when Bulba, at last, emerged from beneath the bricks, he beheld these three Jews talking with great heat.

Yankel turned to him, and said that everything would be done; that his Ostap was in the city jail, and that, although it would be difficult to persuade the jailer, yet he hoped to arrange a meeting.

Bulba entered the room with the three Jews.

The Jews again began to talk among themselves, in their incomprehensible language. Taras took a good look at each of them. Something seemed to have affected him deeply; on his rough and stolid countenance a consuming flame of hope flashed up, of hope such as sometimes visits a man in the lowest depths of despair; his aged heart began to beat violently, as though he were a youth.

"Hearken, Jews!" said he, and there was a ring of triumph in his words. "You can do anything in the world, even to extracting things from the bottom of the sea; and it has long since passed into a proverb that a Jew will steal from himself, if he takes a fancy to steal. Set my Ostap at liberty! Give him a chance to escape from their diabolical hands. I have promised this man five thousand ducats,— I add another five thousand; all that I have in the way of precious cups, buried gold, my houses, all, even to my last garment, I will sell; and I will enter into a contract with you for my whole life, to share with you, half and half, all the booty I may win in war."

"O, it can't be done, dear noble lord, it's impossible!" "No, it can't be done!" chimed in another Jew.

The three Jews exchanged glances.

"We might try," said the third, with a timid glance at the other two. "Perhaps God will favour us."

All three Jews began to talk in German. Strain his ears as he might, Bulba could make nothing of it: he only caught the word "Mardokhai" often repeated, nothing more.

"Listen, noble lord," said Yankel. "We must consult with a man such as there never was before in all the world . ! as wise as Solomon he is; and if he will do nothing, then no one in the world can do anything. Sit here: this is the key; admit no one!" Thereupon the Jews went out into the street.

Taras locked the door, and gazed from the tiny window upon the dirty Jewish prospect. The three Jews halted in the middle of the street, and began to talk with a good deal of warmth: a fourth soon joined them, and, finally, a fifth. Again he heard repeated, "Mardokhai, Mardokhai!" The Jews kept glancing incessantly towards one side of the street; at last, at the end of it, from behind a dirty house, there emerged a foot in a Jewish shoe, and there was a brief glimpse of the flut-

tering skirts of a half-kaftan.—" Ah! Mardokhai, Mardokhai! " exclaimed the Jews with one voice. A gaunt Jew, somewhat shorter than Yankel, but even more wrinkled, and with a huge upper lip, approached the impatient group; and all the Jews made haste, even interrupting one another, to talk to him. During the recital, Mardokhai cast several glances towards the little window, and Taras divined that the conversation concerned him.

Mardokhai waved his hands, listened, interrupted, spat frequently to one side, and, pulling up the skirts of his half-kaftan, thrust his hand into his pocket and drew out some jingling object, showing his very dirty trousers in the operation. Finally, all the Jews set up such a shout, that the Jew who was standing on guard was forced to make a signal for silence, and Taras began to fear for his own safety; but when he remembered that Jews cannot consult anywhere except in the street, and that the demon himself cannot understand their language, he regained his composure.

Two minutes later the Jews all entered the room together. Mardokhai approached Taras, tapped him on the shoulder, and said: " When we wish to act, then things will be as they should." Taras looked at this Solomon such as the world had never known, and conceived some hope: in fact, his face might well inspire some confidence: his upper lip

was simply an object of horror; its thickness had doubtless been increased by adventitious circumstances. The beard of this Solomon consisted of only about fifteen hairs, and they were all on the left side. Solomon's face bore so many scars of battle, received for his audacity, that he had, no doubt, lost count of them long before, and grown accustomed to regarding them as birthmarks.

Mardokhai departed, accompanied by his comrades, who were filled with admiration for his wisdom. Bulba was left alone. He was in a strange, unaccustomed situation; for the first time in his life, he felt uneasy. His soul was in a state of fever. He was no longer the man he had been, unbending, immovable, strong as an oak; he was faint-hearted now; now he was weak. He trembled at every sound, at every new Jewish figure which showed itself at the end of the street. In this condition he spent the whole day; he neither ate nor drank, and his eye never, for a single moment, quitted the tiny window which looked out on the street. Finally, late at night, Mardokhai and Yankel made their appearance. Taras's heart died within him.

"What news? Are you successful?" he asked, with the restiveness of a wild horse.

But before the Jews had recovered breath to answer, Taras perceived that Mardokhai no

longer had his last lock, which, although very greasy, had fallen in rings from beneath his felt cap. It was evident that he wished to say something, but he began by uttering such nonsense that Taras understood nothing of it. And Yankel himself put his hand very often to his mouth, as though suffering from a cold.

"O, dear noble sir!" said Yankel, "it is utterly impossible now! God is my witness, it is impossible! Such vile people, that one can only spit on their heads in disgust! And Mardokhai here will tell you the same. Mardokhai has done what no man in the world ever did, but it was not God's will that it should be so. Three thousand of the troops are stationed here, and to-morrow all the men are to be executed."

Taras looked the Jew straight in the eye, but no longer with impatience or anger.

"But if the noble lord wishes to see him, then it must be very early in the morning, before sunrise. The sentinels have agreed, and one jailer has promised. But may they have no happiness in the world, woe is me! What greedy people! Even among us there are none such: I had to give fifty ducats to each one, and to the jailer...."

"Good. Take me to him!" exclaimed Taras with decision, and all the firmness returned to his spirit. He agreed to Yankel's proposal that he

should disguise himself as a foreign count, just arrived from Germany, for which purpose the prudent Jew had already provided a costume. It was already night. The master of the house, the above-mentioned red-haired Jew with freckles, drew forth a thin mattress covered with some sort of rug, and spread it on the bench for Bulba. Yankel lay down upon the floor, on a similar mattress. The red-haired Jew drank a small cup of liquor infusion, threw off his half-kaftan, and betook himself,— looking, in his shoes and stockings, a good deal like a chicken,— with his Jewess, to something resembling a cupboard. Two other Jews lay down on the floor beside the cupboard, like a couple of family dogs. But Taras did not sleep: he sat motionless, drumming lightly on the table with his fingers. He kept his pipe in his mouth, and puffed out smoke which made the Jew sneeze, in a state of semi-waking, and wrap up his nose in his coverlet. Scarcely was the sky tinged with the first faint gleams of dawn, when he pushed Yankel with his foot: "Rise, Jew, and give me your Count's dress!"

In a moment he had dressed himself; he blackened his moustache and eyebrows, put on his head a small, dark cap, and not even the kazáks who knew him best would have recognised him. To all appearance, he was not more than five and

thirty. A healthy colour played in his cheeks, and even his scars imparted to him an air of authority. The gold-embroidered costume was extremely well suited to him.

The streets were still asleep. Not a single mercantile person had yet shown himself in the city, basket on arm. Yankel and Bulba went to a building which had the appearance of a crouching stork. It was low, wide, huge and black; and on one side a tall, slender tower projected, like a stork's neck, above which stuck out a bit of roof. This building served for a variety of purposes: it was a barrack, a jail, and even the criminal court. Our travellers entered the gate, and found themselves in a vast room, or covered courtyard. About a thousand men were sleeping there. Straight before them was a small door in front of which sat two sentries playing at some game which consisted in one striking the palm of the other's hand with two fingers. They paid scant heed to the newcomers, and merely turned their heads when Yankel said, "'Tis we, noble sirs; do you hear? 'Tis we. . . ."

"Go in!" said one of them, opening the door with one hand, and holding out the other to his comrade, to receive his blows.

They entered a low, dark corridor, which led them to a room of the same description, with

small windows overhead. "Who goes there?" shouted several voices, and Taras beheld a number of warriors in full armour. "We have been ordered to admit no one."

"'Tis we!" cried Yankel; "we, by heaven, most illustrious sirs!" But no one would listen to them. Fortunately, at that moment a fat man came along, who, from all the signs, appeared to be the commanding officer, for he cursed more loudly than all the rest.

"Noble sir, 'tis we! You know us, and the sir Count will thank you."

"Admit them, a hundred devils and the devil's mother! And admit no one else. And no one is to take off his sword, and no one is to quarrel on the floor, like dogs. . ."

The conclusion of the eloquent order our travellers did not hear. "'Tis we, 'tis I, 'tis your friends!" Yankel said to every one they met.

"Well, can we enter now?" he inquired of one of the guards, when, at last, they reached the end of the corridor.

"Yes, but I don't know whether you are to be admitted to the prison itself. Yan is not here now: another man is standing guard in his place," replied the sentinel. "Aï, aï!" cried the Jew softly: "this is bad, my dear sir!"

"Lead on!" said Taras firmly. The Jew obeyed.

At the door of the underground cells, which ran to a peak at the top, stood a heyduke,[1] with a three-storied moustache. The upper story ran back, the second straight forward, and the third downward, which made him greatly resemble a cat.

The Jew shrank into nothing, and sidled up to him almost sideways: "Your High Excellency! High and Illustrious lord!"

"Are you speaking to me, Jew?"

"To you, illustrious lord."

"Hm,—but I'm merely a heyduke," said the merry-eyed man with the three-storied moustache.

"And I thought it was the Voevod himself, God is my witness, I did! Aï, aï, aï!" Thereupon the Jew wagged his head and spread out his fingers. "Aï, what an imposing aspect! A colonel, as God is my witness, a regular colonel! Another finger's breadth and he'd be a colonel. The noble lord ought to mount a stallion, one as fleet as a fly, and drill the regiments!"

The heyduke arranged the lower story of his moustache, and his eyes grew very merry.

[1] A heyduke is the lackey of a grandee, selected for his height and massive build, and dressed as a Hungarian, a Hussar or a Kazák. I. F. H.

"What a warlike people!" went on the Jew. "Ah, woe is me, what a fine race! All cords and metal disks . they shine like the sun; and the pretty girls, whenever they behold warriors — Aï, aï!" Again the Jew wagged his head.

The heyduke twirled his upper moustache, and uttered a sound which somewhat resembled the neigh of a horse.

"I pray the noble lord to do us a service!" exclaimed the Jew: "Here's a prince who has come hither from a foreign land to get a look at the kazáks. He has never, in all his life, seen what sort of men the kazáks are."

The appearance of foreign counts and barons was sufficiently common in Poland: they were often drawn by curiosity to view this half-Asiatic corner of Europe. They regarded Moscow and the Ukraina as situated in Asia. So the heyduke bowed low, and thought fit to put in a few words of his own.

"I do not know, Your Excellency," said he, "why you should desire to see them. They are dogs, not men; and their Faith is such as no one respects."

"You lie, you son of the Devil!" said Bulba. "You're a dog, yourself! How dare you say that our Faith is not respected? It's your heretical faith which is not respected."

"Oho, ho!" said the heyduke. "Well, I know who you are, my friend; you're one of those who are under my charge. So wait, I'll summon our men."

Taras perceived his indiscretion; but vexation and obstinacy prevented his devising a means of remedying it. Fortunately, Yankel managed to interpose at this moment:— "Most illustrious sir, how is it possible that the Count should be a kazák? And if he were a kazák, where could he have obtained such a dress, and such a count-like mien?"

"O, go talk to yourself!" And the heyduke had already opened his wide mouth to shout.

"Your Royal Highness, silence! Silence, for God's sake!" cried Yankel. "Silence! We will pay you for it in a way you have never dreamed of: we will give you two golden ducats."

"Oho! two ducats! I can't do anything with two ducats. I give my barber two ducats for shaving only the half of my beard. Give a hundred ducats, Jew." Here the heyduke twirled his upper moustache. "And if you don't give a hundred ducats, I'll give the alarm on the spot."

"And why so much?" said the Jew sadly, turning pale, and undoing his leather purse; but it was lucky that he had no more in his purse, and that the heyduke could not count above one hundred.

"Noble sir, noble sir, let us depart quickly! See the evil people yonder!" said Yankel, noticing that the heyduke was turning the money over in his hand, as though regretting that he had not demanded more.

"What do you mean, you devil of a heyduke?" said Bulba. "You've taken our money, and don't mean to show us the men? Yes, you must let us see them. Since you've taken the money, you have no right to refuse."

"Get out! Go to the devil! And if you don't, I'll give the alarm this very minute, and you'll — Take yourselves off, and be quick about it. That's all I have to say."

"Sir, noble sir, let us go! In God's name, let us go! Curse him! May he dream of such horrible things that he will have to spit in disgust!" cried poor Yankel.

Bulba turned slowly, with drooping head, and went back, followed by the reproaches of Yankel, who was devoured with grief at the thought of the wasted ducats.

"And why must you needs stir him up? Why didn't you let the dog go on cursing? That race can't help cursing. O, woe is me, what luck God does send to some folks! A hundred ducats merely for driving us off! And our brother — they'll tear off his earlocks, and they'll do some-

thing dreadful to his face, so that you can't bear to look at it, and no one will give him a hundred ducats. O, my God! Merciful God!"

But this failure made a much more profound impression upon Bulba, which was expressed by a devouring flame in his eyes.

"Come along!" he said suddenly, as though shaking himself; "Let's go to the square. I want to see how they will torture him."

"O, noble sir, why go? That won't do any good now."

"Come along!" said Bulba obstinately; and, sighing, the Jew followed him as a nurse follows a child.

The square on which the execution was to take place was not difficult to find: people were thronging thither from all directions. In that savage age, an execution constituted one of the most interesting of spectacles, not only for the populace, but also for the higher classes. A multitude of the most pious old women, a throng of young girls and women of the most cowardly sort, who would dream the whole night afterwards of bloody corpses, and who shrieked as loudly in their sleep as a drunken hussar, missed no opportunity, nevertheless, to gratify their curiosity. "Ah, what torture!" many of them would exclaim hysterically, covering their eyes, and turning away; but they

would stand their ground for quite a while, nevertheless. Many a one, with gaping mouth and outstretched arms, would have liked to jump upon the heads of the populace to get a better view. Above the mass of small, narrow, commonplace heads, towered the large head of a butcher, admiring the whole process with the air of a connoisseur, and exchanging monosyllabic words with a gunsmith whom he called "Gossip" because he had once got drunk in the same dram-shop with him on a holiday. Some entered into warm discussions, others even laid wagers. But the majority were of the sort who, all the world over, look on at the world and at everything that goes on in it, and merely pick at their noses.

In the foreground, close to the bearded city guards, stood a young noble, or one who appeared to be such, in warlike garb, who had donned literally everything he owned, so that nothing but a ragged shirt and his old shoes were left in his quarters. Two chains, one on top of the other, hung around his neck, with some ducats or other depending from them. He stood with his mistress Yusysya, and kept glancing round incessantly, to make sure that no one soiled her silken gown. He explained everything to her so perfectly that no one could have added a single word.—"All these people, my dear Yusysya," he said, "whom

you behold, have come hither to see the criminals executed; and that man yonder, my love, who holds an axe and other instruments in his hands, is the executioner, and he will despatch them. And when he begins to break them on the wheel, and to torture them in other ways, the criminal will still be alive; but when he cuts off his head, then, my love, he will die at once. Before that he will cry out and move about, but just as soon as his head is cut off it will be impossible for him to cry out, or to eat or drink, because, my dear, he will no longer have any head." And Yusysya listened to it all with terror and curiosity.

The roofs of the houses were dotted with people. From the dormer windows peered very strange faces with beards and something resembling caps. Upon the balconies, beneath awnings, sat the aristocracy. The lovely little hands of a smiling young lady, gleaming like white sugar, clasped the railing. Illustrious nobles, all decidedly stout of figure, looked on with an air of importance. A servitor in brilliant garb, with backward-flowing sleeves, carried round divers beverages and viands. Sometimes a black-eyed rogue would take her cakes or fruit, and fling them among the crowd with her own noble little hand. The throng of hungry knights held up their caps to catch it; and some tall noble, in faded scar-

let jacket and discoloured braid, thrusting his head above the throng, was the first to grasp it with the aid of his long arms, and kissed his booty, pressed it to his heart, and finally put it in his mouth. A hawk, suspended beneath the balcony in a gilded cage, was also a spectator; with beak inclined to one side, and one foot raised, he, also, watched the people attentively.—But suddenly a murmur ran through the crowd, and a rumour spread: "They're coming! they're coming! The kazáks!"

The kazáks walked with uncovered heads, and their long scalp-locks [1] floating. Their beards had grown. They walked neither timidly nor surlily, but with a certain haughtiness. Their garments of handsome cloth were threadbare and hung about them in tatters. They neither looked at nor saluted the populace. At the head of all walked Ostap.

What were old Taras's feelings when he beheld his Ostap! What was in his heart then! He gazed at him from among the crowd, and lost not a single one of his movements. The men had already approached the place of execution.

[1] These long tufts of hair on the crown of a shaven head were a fashion borrowed by the Zaporozhtzi from the Poles. I. F. H.

Ostap halted. He was to be the first to quaff the bitter cup. He glanced at his comrades, raised his hand, and said in a loud voice: "God grant that none of the heretics who stand here may hear, impious wretches, how Christians suffer! Let none of us utter a single word!" Then he walked up to the scaffold.

"Well done, son! well done!" said Bulba softly, and bowed his grey head.

The executioner tore off Ostap's old rags; they fastened his arms and legs in stocks expressly prepared, and — we will not harrow the reader with a picture of the hellish tortures, which would make his hair rise upright on his head. They were the offspring of that coarse, wild age, when men still led the bloody life of warlike expeditions only, and hardened their souls within them, until no sense of humanity remained. In vain did some — a few who were exceptions in that age — oppose such terrible measures. In vain did the King and many knights, enlightened in mind and soul, demonstrate that such severity of punishment could only fan the flame of vengeance in the kazák nation. But the power of the King and the opinion of the wise were as nothing in comparison with the savage will of the magnates of the kingdom who, by their thoughtlessness and incomprehensible

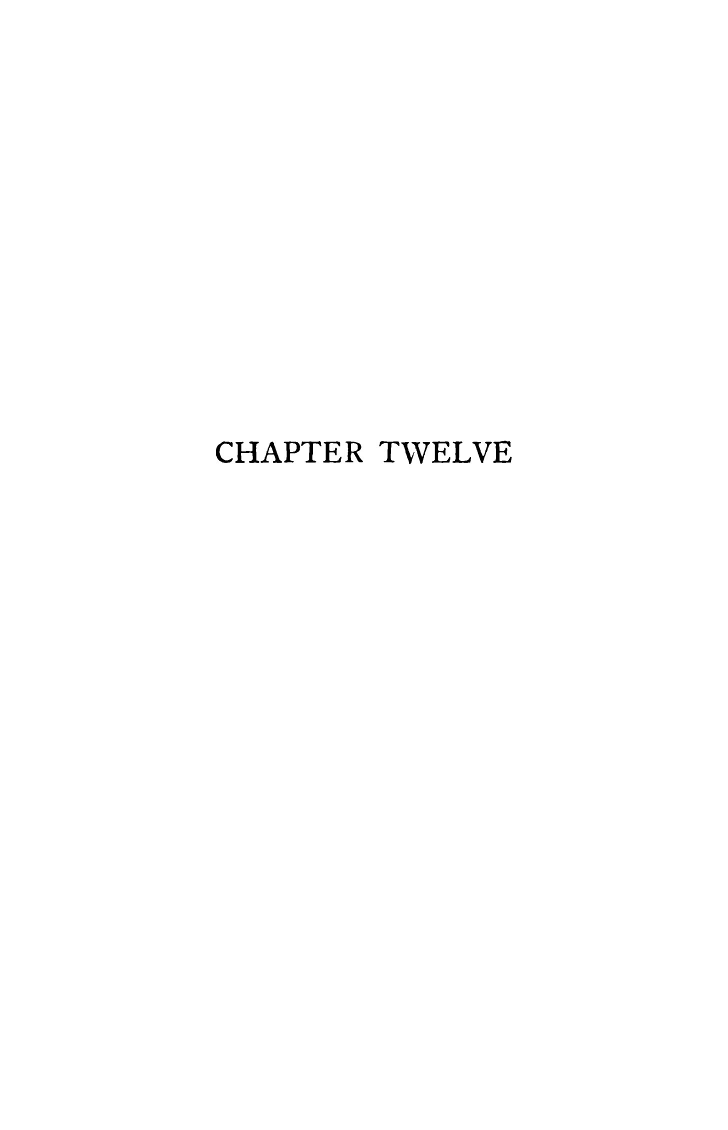
lack of all far-sighted policy, their childish self-love and petty pride, converted the Diet into a satire on government.

Ostap endured the tortures and torments like a giant. Not a cry, not a groan was audible; even when they began to break the bones in his arms and legs, when the horrible cracking could be heard by the most remote spectators amid the deathlike stillness of the throng, when even the young ladies turned aside their eyes, nothing even resembling a groan escaped his lips, nor did his face quiver. Taras stood in the crowd with bowed head; but at the same time, rasing his eyes proudly, he said with approbation: "Well done, son! Well done!" But when they took him to the last deadly tortures, it seemed as though his strength were on the point of failing. And he turned his eyes about him on all sides.

O God! All strangers, all unknown faces! If only some one of his near relatives were but present at his death! He would not have wished to hear the sobs and anguish of his feeble mother, or the unreasoning shrieks of a wife, tearing her hair and beating her white breast: he would have liked to see a strong man who could refresh him with a wise word, and cheer him at the end. And his strength failed him, and he cried aloud,

in the weakness of his soul: "Father! Where are you? Do you hear it all?"

"I hear!" rang through the universal silence, and all that million of people shuddered in concert. A detachment of mounted soldiers hastened anxiously to scan the throng of people. Yankel turned pale as death, and when the horsemen arrived within a short distance of him he turned round in terror to look at Taras: but Taras was no longer beside him; every trace of him was lost.



CHAPTER TWELVE

XII

TRACES of Taras made themselves apparent. A hundred and twenty thousand kazáks descended upon the border-marches of the Ukraina. This was not a small division or detachment which had sallied forth for plunder, or in pursuit of the Tatárs. No: the whole nation had risen, for the measure of the people's patience was full to overflowing; they had risen to avenge the mockery of their rights, the dishonourable humiliation of their characters, the insults to the Faith of their ancestors and their sacred customs, the dishonouring of their Church, the dissolute excesses of the foreign nobles, the Union, the disgraceful domination of Jewdom on Christian soil, and all that had excited and doubled the stern hatred, which the kazáks had cherished for ages. Hetman Ostranitza, young but strong in spirit, led the entire innumerable kazák forces. By his side could be seen his very aged and experienced friend and counsellor, Gunya. Eight colonels led regiments of twelve thousand each. Two Yesauls-general

and a Chief Bearer of the Hetman's mace of office, rode behind the Hetman. A Cornet-general carried the principal standard; many other standards and banners floated afar; the assistants of the Hetman's mace-bearer bore the Hetman's staff. There were also many other officials of the regiment, of the transport-wagons, and of the general army, and regimental scribes, and with them detachments of foot-soldiers and of cavalry. There were almost as many free kazáks and volunteers as there were registered kazáks. The kazáks had risen up everywhere, in Chigirin, from Pereyaslav, from Baturin, from Glukhov, from the regions of the lower Dnyeper, from the whole of its upper course and from the islands. Innumerable horses, and countless camps of carts stretched across the plain. And among all these kazáks, among all those eight regiments, one regiment was the flower of them all, and it was led by Taras Bulba. Everything contributed to give him weight over the others; his advanced years, his experience and skill in directing his troops, and his hatred of the foe, which surpassed that of all the rest. His grey head dreamed of nothing but fire and the hàlter, and his utterances in the councils of war breathed nothing short of annihilation.

It is not worth while to describe all the battles in which the kazáks distinguished themselves, or

the gradual course of the campaign. All that is set down in the Chronicles of old. Every one knows what an army raised on Russian soil for the Faith is like. There is no power stronger than faith. It is menacing and invincible as a rock not made by human hands, amid the stormy, ever-changing sea. From the very heart of the depths of the sea it lifts its impregnable walls to heaven, all built of a single, compact stone. It is visible from every side, and looks the waves straight in the eye as they roll past. And woe to the vessel which is dashed against it! The rigging flies into splinters, everything in it sinks and is crushed into dust, and the startled air reverberates with the cries of the drowning.

The pages of the Chronicles contain a minute description of how the Polish garrisons fled from the liberated towns; how the unscrupulous Jewish revenue-farmers were hung; how weak was the royal Hetman, Nikolai Pototzky, with his numerous army against this invincible force; how, broken, pursued, he drowned the best part of his army in a small stream; how the fierce kazák regiments besieged him in the small town of Polon; and, how, driven to extremities, the Polish Hetman promised, under oath, full satisfaction for everything, in the name of his King and the government officials, and the restitution of all their former rights and

privileges. But the kazáks were not the men to be tricked by all that: they already knew full well the value of a Polish oath. And Pototzky would never more have pranced on his six-thousand ducat race-horse of the Kabarda, attracting the glances of distinguished ladies, and the envy of the nobility; he would never more have cut a figure in the Diet, giving luxurious feasts to Senators,— if the Russian priests who were in the little town had not saved him. When all the clergy in their brilliant gold vestments, with the Bishop himself, cross in hand and episcopal mitre on head, went out to meet the kazáks, bearing the holy pictures and the cross, all the kazáks bowed their heads, and doffed their caps. No one lower than the King himself would they have respected at such an hour; but their boldness subsided before the Church of Christ, and they paid respect to their priesthood. The Hetman and the Colonels agreed to release Pototzky, after having exacted from him a solemn oath to leave all the Christian churches at liberty, to lay aside the ancient enmity, and to do no injury to the kazák army. One colonel alone would not agree to such a peace. That one was Taras. He tore a handful of hair from his head, and cried:

"Eh, Hetman and Colonels! Commit no such womanish deed! Trust not the Lyakhs! The dogs will betray you!"

When the regimental scribe presented the agreement, and the Hetman set his powerful hand to it, Taras drew out his genuine Damascus blade, a rich Turkish sabre of the finest steel, broke it in twain like a reed, and flung the two fragments far away from him on either side, saying: "Farewell! As the two pieces of this sword will never reunite and form one sword again, so, we, comrades, shall never more behold one another in this world. Remember my parting words." (Here his voice rose higher and acquired a hitherto unknown power — and his prophetic utterances troubled them all.) "Before your death-hour you will remember me! Do you think that you have purchased peace and quiet? Do you think you are going to reign like Polish lords? You will reign like Polish lords, but after quite another fashion. They will flay the skin from your head, Hetman, they will stuff it with bran, and long will it be exhibited at all the fairs. And neither will you retain your heads, noble sirs! You will perish in damp dungeons, walled about with stone, if they do not boil you alive in kettles, as they boil sheep!

"And you, my men," he went on, turning to his followers, "which of you wants to die a proper death? not through sorrows and womanish longing, nor drunk under a hedge alongside of the

dramshop; but an honourable kazák death, all in one bed, like bride and groom? Or, perhaps, you would like to go back home and turn infidels, and carry Polish Catholic priests on your backs?"

"We'll follow you, sir Colonel, we'll follow you!" shouted his whole regiment, and many others joined them.

"If you mean to follow me, then come on!" said Taras, pulling his cap further down on his brows; and throwing a menacing glance at the others, he walked to his horse, and shouted to his men: "Let no one reproach us with any insulting speeches! Now, hey there, my lads! we'll go and pay a visit to the Catholics!" Thereupon he lashed his horse, and there followed him a camp of a hundred carts, and with them many cavalry and foot-soldiers; and, turning, he threatened with his glance all who remained behind — and wrath was in his eye. The regiment marched off in full view of the whole army, and Taras continued long to turn and glower.

The Hetman and the colonels were disquieted; all grew thoughtful and remained long silent, as though oppressed by some heavy foreboding. Not in vain did Taras prophesy: all came to pass as he had foretold. A little while afterwards, after the treacherous attack at Kanev, the Hetman's head was mounted on a stake, together with

the heads of many among his principal officers.

And what of Taras? Taras roamed all over Poland with his regiment, burned eighteen towns, and nearly forty churches, and reached Krakov. He slew many nobles of all degrees, and plundered the richest and finest castles. The kazáks opened and poured out on the ground the century-old mead and wine, carefully hoarded up in the noblemen's cellars; they cut and burned rich cloths, garments, and utensils, which they found in the storerooms. "Spare nothing," Taras kept repeating — only that. The kazáks spared not the black-browed gentlewoman, the brilliant, white-bosomed maidens: they could not save themselves, not even at the altar itself; Taras burned them together with the altar. Many were the snowy hands upraised to heaven from amid the fiery flames, accompanied by piteous shrieks, which would have moved the damp earth itself to pity, and caused the steppe-grass to bend low with compassion at their fate. But the ruthless kazáks paid no heed, and picking up the children in the streets upon their lances, they cast them, also, into the flames.

"This is in commemoration of Ostap, you devilish Lyakhs!" was all that Taras said. And such commemorations for Ostap he arranged in every village, until the Polish Government per-

ceived that Taras's raids were more than ordinary expeditions for plunder; and that same Pototzky was given five regiments, and ordered to capture Taras, without fail.

Six days did the kazáks retreat along the country lanes, before the pursuit; their horses barely endured this excessive flight, but they saved the kazáks. But this time Pototzky was equal to the task intrusted to him; unwearily he followed them, and reached the bank of the Dnyeper, where Taras had taken possession of a ruined and abandoned castle, for the purpose of resting.

On the very brink of the Dnyeper, it could be seen, with its shattered ramparts and the ruined remains of its walls. The summit of the cliff was strewn with rubbish and broken bricks, ready at any moment to detach themselves and fly to the bottom. The Royal Hetman, Pototzky, surrounded it on the two sides which faced the plain. Four days did the kazáks fight and struggle, defending themselves with bricks and stones. But their provisions and their strength became exhausted, and Taras resolved to cut his way through the ranks. And the kazáks would have cut their way out, and their swift steeds might again have served them faithfully, had not Taras halted suddenly in the very midst of their flight, and shouted: "Halt! my pipe has dropped with its tobacco: I

won't let those devilish Lyakhs have my pipe!" And the old atamán bent down, and searched in the grass for his pipe full of tobacco, his inseparable companion on all his expeditions on sea and land and at home.

But, in the meantime, a band of Lyakhs suddenly dashed up and seized him by his mighty shoulders. He tried to struggle with all his limbs; but he failed to scatter the heydukes over the ground as he had been wont to do. "O, old age, old age!" he said: and the stalwart old kazák wept. But it was not his age that was to blame: nearly thirty men were hanging on his arms and legs.

"The raven is caught!" shouted the Lyakhs. "Now it is only necessary to think how we can best show him honour, the dog!" and they decided, with the permission of the Hetman, to burn him alive in the sight of every one. Near by stood a naked tree, whose crest had been blasted by lightning. They bound him with iron chains to the trunk of the tree, driving nails through his hands, and raising him as high as possible, that the old kazák might be everywhere visible; and they immediately began to build a pyre of faggots at the foot of the tree. But Taras did not look at the pyre, nor did he think of the fire with which they were preparing to burn him: he gazed

anxiously, the great-hearted man, in the direction whence the kazáks were firing. From his lofty post of observation he could see everything, as in the palm of his hand.

"Take possession, my lads, take possession quickly," he shouted, "of the hillock behind the forest: they can't approach it!" But the wind did not carry his words to them. "They'll perish, perish for nothing!" he said, in despair, and glanced down to where the Dnyeper gleamed. Joy shone in his eyes. He descried the sterns of four boats peeping out from behind the bushes; and he gathered together all the strength of his voice, and shouted in a ringing tone: "To the shore, to the shore, my lads! descend the path on the left, under the cliff. There are boats on the strand; seize them all, that the foe may not catch you!"

This time the breeze blew from the other quarter, and all his words were audible to the kazáks. But for this counsel he received a blow on the head with the butt-end of an axe, which made everything dance before his eyes.

The kazáks rode down the cliff path at full speed; but the pursuers were at their heels. They looked: the path wound and twisted and made many curves aside. "Ah, comrades, luck's against us!" said they all, then halted for an instant, raised their whips — and their Tatár horses

rose from the ground, clove air like serpents, flew over the precipice, and plunged straight into the Dnyeper. Two only failed to land in the river, and thundered from the height upon the stones, and perished there with their steeds, before they could even utter a cry. But the rest of the kazáks were already swimming with their horses and unfastening the boats. The Lyakhs halted on the brink of the precipice, astounded at this wonderful feat of the kazáks, and thinking: "Shall we leap down to them, or not?"

One young colonel, a lively, hot-blooded fellow, own brother to the beautiful Pole who had seduced poor Andríi, did not reflect long, but hurled himself and his horse after the kazáks, with all his might. He turned three somersaults in the air with his steed, and landed heavily on the jagged cliffs. The sharp stones tore him in pieces as he fell into the abyss; and his brains, mingled with blood, bespattered the shrubs which grew on the uneven walls of the precipice.

When Taras Bulba recovered from the blow, and glanced at the Dnyeper, the kazáks were already in the skiffs, and were rowing away. Bullets showered upon them from above, but did not reach them. And the old Atamán's eyes sparkled with joy.

"Farewell, comrades!" he shouted to them

from above; "remember me, and come hither again next spring to make merry! — What if ye have captured me, ye devilish Lyakhs? Think ye that there is anything in the world which the kazák fears? Wait; the time will come when ye shall learn what the Orthodox Russian Faith is like! Already the peoples, far and near, are beginning to understand it. A Tzar shall arise from the Russian soil, and there shall not be a Power in the world which shall not submit itself to him!" But the fire had already risen above the faggots: it was lapping his feet, and the flames spread to the tree. . . . But can any fire, flames or power be found on earth capable of overpowering Russian strength?

Not small is the river Dnyeper, and in it are many deep pools, dense reed-beds, shallows and little bays; its watery mirror gleams brightly, resounding with the ringing plaint of the swan, and the proud wild goose glides swiftly over it; and many are the woodcocks, tawny-throated grouse, and various other sorts of birds to be found among the reeds and along its shores. The kazáks floated swiftly on in the narrow, double-ruddered boats,— rowed stoutly, carefully shunning the reefs, cleaving the ranks of the birds, which rose on the wing — and talked of their Atamán.

THE END